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TWILIGHT OR NOON?

BY L. M. P.

When drowns the sun his golden fire
In opal tints beyond the rim
Which binds our little circle here,
Pale twilight comes with cold eyes dim.

Your love for me was like that sun,
Which warmed to life my fainting soul;
Its fire through all my being ran,
Chased morbid thoughts and made me whole!

Can it be true you would be kind
For my sake, darling, in your rush?—
But all your fires are quenched, and you
Have waned to friendship—bitter truth!

Ah, then, I cannot, will not bear
Gray twilight after passion's glow;
Oh, give me back my noon of love,
Or break my heart and let me go!

From the Dead Past.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SCRUB," "A BITTER CUP," "LOVER AND LORD," "THE WYCHFIELD HORROR," "A SILVER WEDDING," ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

DINNER with the Marsdens is neither a very lengthy nor a pretentious meal, even on state occasions; but to Dolly's feverish and excited fancy it seems as though this particular dinner would never end. She is questioned and cross-questioned by Constance and Maggie as to Jane's accident, until at last she returns a snappish answer that causes every one to look at her in wonder.

Then Con, noticing how worn and ill the girl looks, persuades her to go to her room to rest, accompanying her thither. As soon as Con leaves her, however, Dolly throws a lace shawl over her shoulders and steps down into the garden. She is in a confused, troubled, but not, on the whole, an unhappy state of mind. It is not exactly pleasant to know that on one point she is, and must resign herself to be, kept in the dark—not exactly pleasant to know that her lover—the man she loves so dearly, and to whom she has promised an implicit trust—is to share a secret still with a woman so beautiful and so unscrupulous as Rosalie Hurst; but, though not pleasant, she feels that she can bring herself to bear even this, and still believe in Walter Brackenbury's truth.

"I will not trust him less than Jennie," she mutters, with brightening eyes and a resolute raising of her pretty head—"I, who know him and love him so much better than she. He loved Rosalie Hurst once—that he did not deny. Well"—with a pitiful impatient sigh she manages, or, at any rate, thinks she manages to reconcile herself even to that most distasteful idea—"that was long, long ago. She had passed out of his life, out of his thoughts, until he met her here. He told me—and he is right—that, when he gives me all his present and all his future, I should not be jealous of the past. I will not be, dear. I will tell you so—tell you I trust you wholly, whence you come; and I think—I think it will be soon."

She half expects to find her lover at their favorite spot under the almond tree, where he generally smokes his after-dinner cigar; but he is not there, and has not been there, for the air is perfumed only by the natural odor of flowers. For a few seconds she is conscious of a vague disappointment and uneasiness, then she laughs at herself with unaffected scorn.

"Did not Con say as we left the dining-room that she would take me off to rest? I dare say he thinks I am comfortably tucked up on the sofa, or even perhaps taking a nap. He may not expect me or come out here for half an hour or more; at any rate, I shall not expect him till then. Papa is in an unusually talkative mood too; he can hardly insist on interrupting his discourse to run away."

But, though she comforts herself with these wise words and makes these doughty resolutions, the girl grows restless and uneasy as the time passes on. The half-hour is gone, another quarter chimes out, the hour strikes—nine—and still no sound breaks the soft silence of the summer night, no cigar scent warns her that her lover is at hand. Still she does her best honestly not to give way, not to doubt or distrust her lover, or magnify what must be a mere accident into a grave misfortune.

"Hark!" She colors with relief and pleasure as she hears a footfall on the gravel path, and makes an eager movement forward to meet her tardy lover; but her blush fades, her eyes grow dim again, as she adds, with a scared look, "Oh, no, it must be one of the girls; that is not Walter's step!"

And indeed at that very moment Maggie's dark head appears between the trees. Maggie herself comes forward, crying:

"Well, runaway, I thought I should find you here—and a nice little ghost you look! This is a sensible way of resting yourself after a long day in town! What do you think Walter will say when I tell him the trick you have played us all?"

"Walter will not know that I have not been sleeping sweetly for the past hour. I suppose he is still in the dining-room with papa?"

Maggie raises her brows in sheer surprise.

"My dearest Dolly, are you dreaming? When did you know the Rector so sociably disposed? He went back to his study about ten minutes after you left the room."

"Then Walter has been—with you?"

"Not he, my dear; so you need not be jealous on that score! I was very busy, and Con was up in Jane's room; so he went for a stroll down the village quite an hour ago."

"Down the village!" Dolly hardly understands why the dull ache in her heart seems to grow just a little harder to bear; Maggie certainly sees no reason for the rapidly increasing pallor, the piteous questioning look. "And—and he has not yet returned?"

"Dear me, no! Why should he? It is very little over nine o'clock. Dora is not back yet, and she really should keep better hours. But I tell you what it is, Miss Dolly—if you don't come in and go to bed now, you will be downright ill to-morrow; you look a regular spectre now! Come like a good girl!"

She slips her hand within her sister's arm and tries to lead her back to the house; and Dolly submits for a little while—there is neither use nor reason in resistance if Walter is away. But why has he broken the promise he gave with such extreme reluctance—why, and where has he gone, without a word to her?

"Even Jennie thought I should have causes for trouble, for suspicion, if I gave him every opportunity for explanation and he still declined to explain," she thinks, recalling with extreme bitterness her gentle sister's puzzled "Why, then!" "I did try to be patient—to trust him through everything; but now how can I think he cares for me when he keeps me in such cruel suspense? Hark, Maggie, what is that?"

She comes to a sudden standstill, and speaks with a quick change of tone. Maggie shrugs her shoulders; she too has caught the sound of the clicking gate, and says resignedly—

"Well, I rather expect it is your recreant knight; and, if so, as I have no particular fancy for picking gooseberries for an indefinite period, I may as well vanish from the scene; but don't stay out too long, Dolly, even though you may be pleasantly engaged. Your roses are blooming again, I see; but you were a dismal little spectre a minute or two ago, and will be again if you don't take care. Why, it is only Dora, after all!"

"Only Dora!" Dolly echoes, with a wail of bitter disappointment; and Dora, who comes up the path with unusual briskness and is well within earshot now, makes a queer little grimace, as she cries mockingly—

"Only Dora! How nice that is to hear! What a vanity-inflating welcome! Yes, it is 'only Dora,' I regret to say. And pray whom did your ladyships expect?"

"Only Walter!" Maggie answers curtly; and the next minute she regrets the words, seeing by the twinkle of satisfaction in Dora's small, keen, black eyes that they have given the very answer Dora wished and expected to receive. "At least," she adds, with over-acted carelessness. "I thought it might be Walter. Dolly was resting after her fatigues, and as he, I suppose, found the Rectory dull without her, he went down the village for a stroll."

"Ah, that accounts for it!" Dora observes, with a sapient shake of the head and the relieved expression of a person to whom some mystery has suddenly been made clear. "I could not understand it at first; but, of course, if Dolly has allowed him an 'evening out,' he is free to spend it in what fashion he likes. I always think an engaged man must relish a little liberty."

"Accounts for what?" Dolly asks, in a strained tone.

Maggie looks at her anxiously, and says, rather angrily—

"Don't ask any more questions, Dolly! Dora is only trying to tease you and say spiteful things. You ought to know her monkey taste for mischief. Of course she met Walter in the village; I told you myself where he had gone."

"Oh, you did! Then I really think you are the mischief-maker, not I. I should never have told Dolly how and where I met him; but then you have a character for bland benevolence, whereas I"—she shrugs her shoulders and raises her black eyes—"I should have been credited at once with inciting to a breach of the peace. So true it is that one man or woman may steal a horse while another may not even look over a hedge."

"Come in, Dolly," Maggie urges, seeing all too plainly now the opportunity she has given Dora to indulge her mischief-making propensities and yet proclaim her innocence of any intentional harm.

But Dolly does not stir; she stands, cold, pale, resolute, waiting for the blow to fall.

"Where did you meet him?" she says, in a low tone. "No, Maggie, please do not interfere; let Dora tell me the whole truth."

"Why should she not, since she has told it herself already?" Dora cries gaily. "I met him where you knew he was going—at the door of the Nest, and I left him with Rosalie!"

"With Rosalie!"

The echoed words break in the faintest murmur from the pale drawn lips. Only an attentive ear could catch the sound; but Dora answers at once—

"Yes, with Rosalie only; for, as you of course know, Trix has been captured by her faithful follower, and won't be home till quite late. If I were you, Dolly—— Why, Maggie, what is the matter?"

She asks the question with conscience-stricken haste, and for the moment, malicious and envious as she is, she does really wish she had left those spiteful words unspoken—for, with a low sobbing moan, Dolly drops suddenly to the ground.

"What is the matter?" Dora repeats, in a helpless tone, as Maggie kneels beside the girl and lifts her head, with a cry of anger and dismay. "Was she ill? Has there been a quarrel or anything to upset her? There must have been, for she has fainted, like the heroine of a novel!" she adds, with an attempt at her old sarcastic tone; but there is a scared look in her eyes and her lips are pale. A fear that she has gone too far, and done more injury than she meant, is strong within her now. "We are not given to timely swoons, Maggie. Surely there must be something more than I have said or done to make her faint?"

"Don't underrate your abilities," Maggie answers, with a scorn more savage if more generous than Dora's own. "You have done your best to kill your sister, simply because you grudged her a happiness that could be no wrong or offence to you. I congratulate you on your night's work!"

"Maggie!" Dora's voice is sharp with terror now. "Maggie, you are saying that only to punish me! It is wicked nonsense. Dolly is not dead."

"Oh, no! You can make her suffer a good deal more—people are not quite so easily killed," Maggie answers grimly. "No, you can do nothing, thank you"—as, seeing Dolly slightly move her pretty head, Dora presses up with eager offers of help. "She is coming to, and I don't think she will care to see you and remember your last words. Why don't you go back and hatch some more plots with your chum Rosalie? She will be able perhaps to take Walter away and break Dolly's heart altogether—with your help. Go back and tell her what has happened here to-night, at any rate!"

Dora gives no answer, and Maggie looks up, something of dismay mingling with the surprise of her glance.

"Oh, I heard you!" the other says. "I don't mind your hard words; you never mince them when you are in a rage, and perhaps I deserve something of what you say. But, Maggie, you tell me to go back to the Nest and report to Rosalie what happened here to-night. It would be more to the purpose if I told you what happened there!"

"Well?"

Maggie's tone is not encouraging, but there is an eager query in her bright brown eyes.

"I cannot tell you now. Get Dolly in, then come and talk things over with me. Only believe this—this is a secret, and a terrible one, between Walter Brackenbury and Rosalie Hurst! I knew they were not strangers, but never till to-night guessed there was a real strong tie between them."

CHAPTER XV.

"You must stay at any rate until you have made your communication now, Walter. It is unfortunate, I admit, that you should have been seen again entering my house; but then, you see, I am a persona grata with your future wife's family."

Rosalie speaks composedly, though her heart throbs with an almost intolerable triumph, as she looks into Walter Brackenbury's face and understands how completely Fate has taken the cards out of her hand—is playing her game for her, and playing to win. They stand together by

the open gate by which Dora has paused to bid them a smiling and significant "Good night"—the man and woman who were lovers once—who look like lovers still, though lovers between whom there is anything but peace.

"Yes—I must stay," Brackenbury agrees, with a moody bitter reluctance that at any less triumphant moment would have made his companion savagely angry, that makes her wince even now. "What I have to say must be said at all costs, Rosalie; but it need not take me long. I want to ask you one question."

"The question you came to ask this afternoon," she says, fixing her large eyes pleadingly upon his and thinking that it must be of the last importance to him. What can it be? Whom can it concern but herself? And, if it concerns him so deeply for her sake, is there not still a chance, and much more than a chance, that she may still win him back from Dolly—win back the old allegiance, the old love?

"He can never care for her, a mere pretty little schoolgirl, as he cared for me," she thinks; "her own sister sees it clearly, and tells me so day by day. He must break the foolish promise that binds him to Dolly Maraden and come back to me. Surely, surely, he is coming now!"

She can hardly doubt it, meeting those frank and earnest eyes that rest upon her with a strange yearning tenderness—with an intense compassion, she would think also, but that idea is absurd.

Suddenly she draws near to him, slips her hand within his arm, leans her delicate head nearer and nearer till it almost rests upon his shoulder, and repeats; in a low caressing tone—

"The question you came to ask this afternoon, Walter—the question you could not put while Dolly Maraden was here."

"Yes," he answers quickly, almost roughly, releasing himself with scant ceremony from the half-embrace. The sound of his little sweetheart's name gives him fresh nerve and strength. There must be no more misunderstanding—no fresh pain for the girl who has deserved none. Once he has disburdened himself of his pressing fears and put Rosalie upon her guard, he can feel that his duty is done, that his path in life lies widely apart from hers, that he can emerge from the ugly cloud of mystery and deceit that vexes and irritates him every moment now. "Yes—I could not speak before her or any one; but of course it was hardest—with her from whom I will keep no secret of my own."

"But the secrets of others are different," Rosalie cries, with jealous sharpness.

"There are, and therefore with them I will have as little as possible to do here. You have not made things very pleasant for me here, Rosalie; but I will not reproach you."

"Oh, do not spare me!" she says, with a curious inflection, a curious smile. "You never did, you know, when things went most hardly with me long ago—why should you begin now?"

He grows a shade paler and shivers a little, whether at the remainder or the implied reproach she cannot tell.

"I was thinking of that long ago," he says at last, with a visible effort. "It is of that I have to speak."

She looks again into his face and sees there something that frightens her. Her hand goes to her heart—the heart that no longer beats high with exultation, but throbs heavily with chill fear.

"Of that! Will you come into the house then?"

He hesitates, glances at the open window, through which the pretty lamp-lit room is dimly visible, then says, with a short sigh—

"It may be better, perhaps, since what I have to say must be kept wholly to ourselves. Not that there is much difference between that room and the garden, so far as privacy or safety is concerned. Do you sit there at all hours and alone, Rosalie?"

"Why not? I am generally alone. Trix has other interests, other friends. And, truth to tell, I prefer my own company!"

"But it is hardly safe." He speaks in a grave troubled tone and looks anxiously round. "It is hardly wise or safe to have the house open at dusk—a house with only women in charge!"

"Oh, safe!" she echoes indifferently. "I am not afraid. You forget what an innocent idyllic place Wilminster is!"

"Innocent and idyllic places have their tragedies now and then—are occasionally visited by burglars and—tramps."

"Maybe, Walter—still I say I am not afraid. Poor people enjoy a happy immunity from such fears. Trix gets a little nervous and protests against my open doors and windows occasionally; but then such small treasures as we have in the shape of old fashioned plate and jewelry belong to her—I am a mere dependant on her bounty. Did I ever tell you that my aunt disinherited me when she heard that story? Like you and all the rest, she deserted me when I most needed friends and help. If ever any one did, I lost everything at one fell swoop."

Brackenbury does not defend himself against the charge which she utters with mingled passion and tenderness—does not answer or seem to have heard her words. He has followed her into the room, and they stand together by the round table, the red-shaded lamp casting a rosy glow upon their two figures.

"You were born for the stage, Rosalie," he says. "With your face and your talents, you should have easily distanced all competitors and made yourself the first actress of the day."

She draws up her slender figure and holds her head erect, her color deepens and her eyes sparkle yet more brightly, as she cries—

"I might have been—I would have been—but for that man! But why do you say that now?"

"Because you are always acting—have always acted with me! And now I would give more than I can easily puts in words to feel sure that just for once you were perfectly true and honest, that you had spoken the whole truth!"

"Just for once!" she echoes slowly and in a puzzled tone; then all at once a light seems to break in upon her, she turns to him with an indescribable gesture of allurement and entreaty, and says, in a passionate whisper, "Yes, just once! Heaven knows I have been false and wicked in a thousand ways; but, Walter, when I said I loved you, Heaven knows I only spoke the truth!"

As soon as she has spoken, she sees her mistake. Brackenbury's face hardens, as does his tone.

"I was not thinking of that—of things that are past and done with," he says sternly; "but of the present—and the future."

Admirable actress as she is, and as he has called her, she does not find it easy to conceal her anger and humiliation now. She trembles from head to foot with passion, as she says, with a sharp laugh—

"In those circumstances, Sir Walter Brackenbury, you really must not expect me to answer any more questions, since my present and future life, my truth and untruth, must be matters of most perfect indifference to you."

"They can never be that," he answers. "Why will you twist and misconstrue my words, Rosalie? I must think of your future, for I fear it holds a danger for you."

"Danger! From burglars or tramps?" she echoes, with immeasurable scorn.

He winces visibly at the words, and draws a little nearer in his growing earnestness.

"From a man who cherishes a mad hatred, who—— Rosalie"—he rests his hand upon her shoulder as she is turning impatiently away—"answer one question truly and honestly, for your own sake, for—for mine."

"Well"—his earnestness and that reluctantly uttered last word serve to stir her smouldering hopes—"I will answer as honestly as I can."

"Are you sure, then—absolutely sure and certain—that Sydney Ferrars is dead?"

She utters a little cry of rage and pain.

"Sure? Yes, thank Heaven I am!" she cries; and Brackenbury shudders at the reckless impiety of the words, the fierce malignity of the tone, though in one way the answer gives him an inexpressible relief.

That she is speaking from an absolute conviction now he does not for a second doubt, and on such a point it is hardly likely that she should be deceived; and yet——

"That is enough; thank you for bearing with me," he says, very gently now, and is turning to go; but she stays him with an imperious gesture and cries—

"Not just yet! It is my turn now to ask a question, to prove the truth of my words. You doubt me still. Oh, yes, I see the suspicion in your eyes! But you shall have proof; only answer my question now. Is it for some real reason or only to torture and humiliate me that you speak of—Sydney Ferrars—to-night?"

"For a very real reason, Rosalie."

"And that is——"

"And that is that I thought he was alive and in Wilminster, and, remembering the past and his oath of vengeance, I trembled for your safety—for your life."

"You had some reason—baseless and absurd, of course, since the wretched creature is most surely dead—to think that. Tell me—what was it, Walter?"

Sir Walter hesitates for a few seconds, wondering how much it will be wise to say and to leave unsaid. If the man who has such cause to hate her and whom she so fiercely hates be really dead, it is mere useless cruelty to put unhappy fancies into her mind. But if by any chance she should be deceived—and such chances are always possible—why, then there may befall her a fate of which he shudders to think, and, thinking, decides that she must be warned at any cost.

"I had a reason," he says, taking her cold hand in his and looking at her very tenderly and pitifully. "You heard Dora Maraden speak of that tramp, the man who frightened her and Dolly?"

"Whom Mr. Clayden benevolently took in? Yes; Dora described him as a monster of repulsive ugliness, squalor, and misery. What of him? Did you think that he——"

"The squalor and misery are true enough, Heaven knows," Walter says slowly; "for the rest, who shall say? Want and the life of a wild beast have changed him so horribly that the mother who bore him might fail to recognise his face; but he is tall, well built, and has been a soldier, I will swear."

"Oh"—she clasps her hands before her eyes with a sharp cry of pain—"this is cruel—horrible! You are avenging his wrongs and your own to-night, Walter, when you make me pass through that agony again, and all for no reason—because you meet a tramp, who may have been a deserter."

"Not for that only. You do not think it, Rosalie; there is another and more pressing reason than any you have named. This man—he is here still, Rosalie, a deadly peril to some woman, if not to you—this man, half mad with sickness, want and misery, is madder still with a wild thirst for revenge."

"Revenge on whom?"

"On some woman who has wronged him. No—that proves nothing; there are many hundred women who treasure up some real or fancied wrong. But there is more still; he knows my name, Rosalie—questioned my servant fiercely about me."

"You say he looks a soldier. Perhaps he is some deserter from your troop who fears that you will recognise and betray him."

Brackenbury looks at Rosalie with a little passing wonder even then that she can so hardily pronounce such words; but the wonder does not harden him now—his pity for the beautiful reckless creature is too strong, though it is still a little vague.

"I thought that too, and, if his knowledge ended there, if he knew only my name, I should think so still. But"—again he regards her with intense and longing pity—"why should a mere deserter from my regiment know and show violent emotion at the sound of yours?"

"Of mine?" Rosalie cries breathlessly, and for a minute her face becomes more terrified even than his, but it is for a moment only; then her eyes light up and she gives a clear ringing laugh of scorn. "Why, Walter, how absurd we are to be scared by such a phantom fear as that! Why should Sydney Ferrars—supposing your wretched tramp were that more wretched man—who is dead, dead, dead—what should he know of Mrs. Hurst?"

"Nothing," Brackenbury answers. "He did not hear your name, but that of your sister."

"Of Trix, you mean."

"I mean that Mr. Clayden's servant spoke of Miss Massey, and—don't, Rosalie, my poor girl!"

For Rosalie, with a cry of utter agony, falls back on the chair, her eyes closed, her lips apart, her face so deathly pale and drawn that he thinks for the moment that he has killed her—that she is dying now. But she is stronger than he thinks, she does not even faint, though it takes all the strength of her strong will to look the horror in the face and still retain consciousness.

She does both, however, for one moment, while Brackenbury, forgetting everything in his intense concern, bends over her in an attitude of lover-like entreaty; she yields to her fears, and thinks the end of all things is at hand—the man she has used so cruelly is on her track and will surely hunt her down. Then suddenly, as it confronts her, the horror grows less real, her old incredulity returns; she turns to express her thoughts to the man beside her, and, meeting his eager eyes, thinks that the old love has been given back too.

"And, if so, it is worth all the fright, all the shock he has given me," she thinks, with a wild thrill of exultation and delight. "He would never look at me like that unless he cared—unless I were more to him than Dolly Maraden still. Oh, this blow that I thought would crush me will be—shall be—but the transforming touch of a fairy's wand! Let me only prove to him that Sydney Ferrars is dead and I am free—as I can prove it—and then—and then, all will be given back to me again—his love, and the all that makes that love a more desirable possession than ever!"

Walter sees the pallor fade away, the lovely languid eyes unclose, and, little guessing the thoughts and wishes that have played the part of strong restoratives, cries eagerly—

"You are better now, Rosalie?"

"Better? Oh, yes!" She smiles with languid gratitude, and gently presses the strong brown hand she has taken in her soft palm. "It was very foolish to break down in that fashion, Walter; but you gave me a great shock."

"Most unwillingly, but I wished to put you on your guard."

"You were most kind. If"—in spite of her valor and her assured conviction, Rosalie's voice is a little tremulous over the last word—"if your news were true, it would be my death sentence, Walter! If Sydney Ferrars were a living and a free man, he would surely find me out, wherever I might hide, and, finding out, he would surely kill me!"

"Rosalie!"

"Oh, he would!" she says, with a dreadful earnestness and a shudder that she vainly struggles to repress. "You did not hear it; but it has haunted me through all these years, it haunts me still at times—the vow he made when he was taken. He swore that I—I was the murderess, Walter! He vowed that I should suffer as he had suffered, that I should die; and he meant every word he said, he was never a man to forgive. If he had been living, he would have kept that vow; but he cannot keep it now—Heaven has been merciful to me—and he is dead!"

"You are sure—quite sure of that?"

"You shall see and judge for yourself. There is no room for doubt. Wait here a few minutes and I will bring you fullest proof of Sydney Ferrars's death."

Brackenbury glances uneasily at the clock, then says hesitatingly—

"Perhaps it would be well now to wait until to-morrow. It is nearly ten o'clock. Your sister will be home soon, and——"

"And Dolly Maraden will be jealous," Rosalie says, with a reckless laugh and a look of piteous pleading in her eyes. "Is not that the real reason, Walter? Well, I do not complain; she is all and I am nothing to you—except the woman you are risking much to save from a horrible fate. But even she might spare you for a little while to discuss a matter of life and death."

"She would—she will; fetch the proofs—papers—whatever they are, Rosalie. For Heaven's sake let me set this horrible doubt at rest!"

Rosalie goes then, content for the time with her victory. And, left alone, Brackenbury plants his elbows on the mantelboard and buries his face in his hands, feeling more thoroughly weary, worn out and depressed than he has ever felt before; he is half ashamed too of the superstitious terror he cannot shake off.

"A matter of life and death," he murmurs, repeating Rosalie's last words. "Heaven knows it is all that. I wonder how it will end."

After a while he raises his head and listens intently.

There is the unmistakable sound of a step without, a stealthy creeping sound, that ceases as he moves. The blood rises to his forehead, some instinct warns him of danger lurking near, and he moves quickly to the open window. Nothing is visible from there, though the night is cloudless and clear.

"And yet I will swear I heard a footfall!" he cries, stepping out; and with the words on his lips, as he touches the last of the verandah steps, he falls heavily to the ground, struck down by a blow from a heavy stick.

CHAPTER XVI.

MEANWHILE, all unconscious of what is happening below, Rosalie, in the seclusion of her own room, is busily collecting her "proofs." Her eyes shine, her cheeks burn, though she shivers with cold, and the hand with which she takes out the small despatch-box from a doubly-

locked drawer is chill as ice. Borne up by intense excitement as she is, brave and brazen out her own terrors as she may, she cannot help being in a measure infected by Brackenbury's fears. If she should be wrong after all? If Sydney Ferrars should be living still? The vista opened up by such a conjecture is too horrible; she cannot and will not let her thoughts turn that way.

"He will not doubt these!" A sense of security comes to her with reviving force, as she takes from the open box two folded newspapers and a couple of large parchment envelopes bearing official seals. "He will see, as I do, that these gives proof indisputable of that man's death, and are my title-deeds to freedom, and—who knows?—perhaps happiness."

With this last hope increasing the lustre of her eyes, deepening the rose-tint on her face, making her look, in the soft lamplight and in the pretty white dress she has chosen for some reason to wear to-night, radiant and happy as a bride, she goes down the staircase, to meet her doom. At the door of the room in which she has left Walter Brackenbury she pauses for a few seconds to gain breath and so much coolness as she can command now; and as she stands there she hears a curious sound, a soft rattle of rings, that puzzles her for one moment and the next makes her smile.

"He has drawn the curtain. How prudent he is!" she thinks, with warm approval of and a little wonder at a discretion that surpasses her own. "Of course it would never do for him to be caught for the third time in one day by the Rectory folk; and, besides, with these about—— Oh, he is very wise!"

She holds the papers a little away from her, then presses them passionately to her lips. They remind her of all the shame, all the misery, all the humiliation of her past life; but they are what she proudly calls them—her title-deeds to freedom, and so the most precious things in the world to her.

"I am like a girl with her love-letters," she cries, and turning the handle of the door, passes into the room, which seems to have grown suddenly dark. "Why, Walter," she exclaims, with a puzzled laugh, "lamp and gas both turned down! Surely that is carrying caution a little too far and rendering our pleasant task impossible. You have shut the windows and drawn the curtains, I see. That is quite right—we want no intruders dropping in; but a glimmer of light we must have, if only to see each other."

No answer is returned, there is only the sound of hoarse and hurried breathing—a sound that seems to make her heart stand still; and she strains her eyes to trace the outline of the tall dark form, standing just were she had left Walter Brackenbury, on the hearthrug, but a few minutes before.

"Walter!"

The sound of her own harsh shrill voice adds to her paralyzing terror—it is utterly beyond her own control, so utterly unlike her own.

"Walter, if this is a trick, it is a very cruel one. You are there—I know it; but turn up the gas—the lamp. I want to see your face."

"And you shall see it, as I see yours, after many years—as I see yours, at last!"

It is not Walter Brackenbury's clear voice that answers her, but a voice hoarse, husky, weak, and yet most terrible in its savageness; and changed, horribly changed as it is, it is a voice the miserable woman knows too well and has thought hushed for ever in this world—the voice of the man she has betrayed, the man who has sworn her death!

A sudden paralysis seizes her. She knows what is to come, and, when the light is fully turned on, she is standing rigid and statue-like, incapable of speech or movement, hardly capable of receiving any further shock at sight of the dreadful object on which her eyes rest—at sound of the dreadful voice that cries—

"Yes—you shall see my face—at last! Look at me, and welcome me home, my wife!"

She looks, she cannot choose but look; he stands so near that his hot breath stirs the little silky curls that cluster about her forehead, his bloodshot eyes glare into hers, his hand—thin as a skeleton's, yet strong as iron—grips her round the delicate wrist.

It is the grip of death—in her inmost heart she knows that, and yet she makes no effort to move or cry; the worst has come to her already—the man of whose death she has been so proudly sure lives, and the long account between them will be settled at last!

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Cherry's Mistake.

BY T. L. R.

"WHERE'S Cherry? Cherry will have to pick the strawberries for lunch."

"Where is she, indeed? I'm sure I don't know now, but she's been crying in the corner all the morning because papa has discharged old Mackenzie."

And Miss Charlotte dusted plaques and shook up cushions vigorously.

So provoking to have the housemaid ill, and young Frank Waters coming to Westdale! Just now, too, she regretted the absence of old Mackenzie, who had been Squire Marston's gardener and man-of-all-work for fifteen years; he was so good-natured and accommodating in an emergency—would turn his hand to anything, and put everybody in good humor with his drollery.

But Mac was growing old, and the squire needed a younger man on the place. Old Mac would remain only to instruct Tom Hall in his duties, and foolish Cherry, the younger sister, was crying because her old friend and comrade was going away from Westdale.

"Well, she must pick the strawberries," said Ethel, the beauty. "There is no one else. I'm sure I can't go out in the hot sun with my complexion, and I've only time to dress and do my hair before Mr. Waters gets here. Is there plenty of jelly for the cold chicken? And did you make the macaroons, Lottie?"

"Don't you worry about my part," said Lottie, flourishing her feather-duster. "See that you do yours as well," with a significant look.

Ten minutes afterwards a young girl walked rapidly down the garden-path with a tin-pail in her hand.

It was eleven o'clock, and a fervid heat was pouring down on her pretty hat.

"Excused from my lessons to pick strawberries for Ethel's beau, under such a sun as this! I'd quite as lief be reading French with Miss Stanton in the school-room. So much for being the youngest! Why can't Ethel pick her own strawberries, I'd like to know? Oh, dear! I don't mean to be cross, but everything goes wrong lately. Dear old Mac, who taught me to walk, and who has always made me swings, and fixed my garden-beds, and cheered me up when I was in trouble—he must be sent off for hateful old Tom Hall! I know he's young, but I shall call him old! And now this other strange man—Ethel's beau—will be here, and I'm told to 'keep out of the way,' and Miss Stanton and I must skulk away to the school-room, while he and Ethel take up the whole of the house! I suppose he's nice, though. I should like to see him! My! how fine the strawberries are!"

Cherry had reached the strawberry-bed, which lay unsheltered by bush or tree, its great, crimson berries ripening sweetly in the glowing heat.

Pushing back her hat, she knelt down among them.

The tendrils of her chestnut hair clung moist about her young forehead. Her cheeks were flushed by the great warmth; her round lips red as the beautiful fruit over which she bent.

She worked with energy for awhile, but at last paused and surveyed her pail, which was but a third full.

"Oh! dear, what slow work! and how hot it is! I shall never get the pail full!"

She took off her straw hat and fanned her red cheeks.

Just then she espied a young man lying under a tree near the roadside.

"There's that old Tom Hall now!—and I'm going to set him to work. Come here!" she called, authoritatively.

The young man rose quickly from the green grass and approached the imperious young lady.

"You may help me pick these strawberries. You will have to work if you come here, I can tell you!"

The young man bowed and went down obediently upon his knees in the strawberry-bed.

"Papa don't allow any shirking! You can't dress like that here, either!" added Miss Cherry, surveying the attire of the new gardener, which seemed to be of too good a cut and fine quality for a person in Tom Hall's station of life.

"Indeed!"

"No! Old Mac was in his shirt-sleeves and overalls, early and late, ever since I can remember. He's been with us sixteen years, ever since I was a baby, and he's been faithful!" said Cherry, with something very like a sob in her voice. "Do you know anything about gardening?"

"Something!"

"Well, you'll have to know everything! Papa is very particular, especially about his young trees. He'll be sorry for sending Mac off—see if he isn't," concluded Cherry, talking to herself, as she wandered to the other side of the bed.

Whatever else Tom Hall might fail in, he could pick strawberries very rapidly and nicely, and surveying the fast-filling pail, Miss Cherry condescended to be more gracious.

"Thank you! I'll let you finish; you get along so nicely. Perhaps you will please papa. I think very likely," she added, with a sigh.

Retreating a short distance to the shade of an apple-tree, she fanned herself with her hat, and surveyed the prospect.

Tom Hall, looking toward the apple-tree, saw a patch of lapis lazuli sky, boughs of emerald hung with pale green spheres, and beneath them a graceful, weary little figure, in a dress of gray cambric, with abundant chestnut hair shading a pretty face.

In a few minutes he came up with the pail.

"Have you done?" asked Cherry, arousing herself. "Oh, dear! I'm so glad that's finished! I don't often have such disagreeable tasks to do," she continues, more confidentially; "but my sister is expecting company—a gentleman from town—and she's very particular to have a nice lunch. Ethel wouldn't burn her complexion, though, if Frank Waters never had a strawberry in his life!" she added, more to herself. "And I hope he won't want any more while he stays here, if I have to pick them! Heigh-ho! You'd better not let papa see you lying on the grass; you might not make a very good impression on him," she said, as she nodded good-bye, and started for the house.

For her companion, looking quite warm, and with moist curls of dark hair twining almost as tightly as her own about the forehead, retreated to the roadside tree and threw himself down again, good-humoredly smiling, and apparently not in the least offended by the candor of this frank young lady.

"I don't believe he'll suit pa!" she soliloquized. "He's too nice; he'll never get right down to hard work like poor Mac. He did pick the strawberries nicely, though. Glad I met him."

And Cherry entered the house, and gladly delivered up her fragrant burden.

"You and Miss Stanton had better take your lunch in the schoolroom; then you needn't dress."

"Lottie," cried Cherry, "can't I even see him?"

"I am willing, but Ethel says——"

"I don't care what Ethel says! I shall come down. Can't I, papa? can't I have lunch with you?"

"Certainly, certainly! You will do; you look very well," answered the squire, with whom Cherry was a favorite.

And so, when Cherry had hurriedly bathed her forehead and hands in cool water, and braided and tied with a fresh ribbon her abundant chestnut hair, she came quietly into the dining-room a little later; but her father called her cheerfully to a place beside him.

"My youngest daughter, Cherry, Mr. Waters."

A frank, pleasant face, with dark hair curling tightly about a broad, white forehead, and a very good-natured smile. Cherry lifted her broad lids, and gave a little gasp.

"The young lady and I have already met. Let me give you some of the strawberries, Miss Cherry. They are very nice."

And so as the meal was quite without formality, "Tom Hall" heaped Cherry's saucer with strawberries, and began talking to her in the most charming manner. But poor Cherry, from turning scarlet to the tips of her fingers, turned so pitifully white, realizing her dreadful mistake, that it was almost evident that the meal was almost a blank to her.

She got away as soon as she could, ran down into the garden, crept under a syringa bush and cried.

Pretty soon Mr. Waters was on his knees beside her.

"Pray—pray don't take your little mistake so much to heart! It did not harm, and I was very much amused."

"You—you are very good!" sobbed Cherry, "but I never can get over it: and Ethel will never forgive me when she knows—"

"Then we won't tell her," said Frank, cheerfully, and Cherry was sure, then, that he was nice. "It is our secret. Only when I say 'strawberries' you are to be very, very good to me."

So he won the child out of her tears and fears, and leading her down the elm-shaded paths, fanned her with a huge leaf, and chatting charmingly, made her smile till her tears were dried.

"Why, Cherry, child, where did you see Mr. Waters before?" asked Ethel, coming up, and looking a little peculiar.

"Oh, just by the roadside yonder," answered Frank, so carelessly, that Ethel thought nothing more of the matter.

But she observed that he was very attentive to Cherry, and she continued to observe it during the three days of the gentleman's stay. And that was not all, for Frank Waters came again and again to Westdale during the summer, and when Cherry's seventeenth birthday came, made a formal proposal for her hand which was shyly accepted, and now they are happy as the day is long, all through Cherry's mistake.

Bric-a-Brac.

LONG.—Macrocystis, a seaweed of the South Pacific, it is said, often grows to be 20 to 30 inches in diameter, and 1,500 to 2,000 feet in length. In no case do any of these have roots in the proper sense, their nourishment being absorbed from the water by all parts alike.

THE WASP.—"Wape" or "wops," for "wasp," is a very interesting word. The Aryan root is wapss, and the true English form is "waps." But men who knew Latin better than they did English thought it ought to follow the Latin vespa and therefore tranposed the last two letters of the word 'waps," and so made it into "wasp."

DRESSMAKING.—Most likely the oldest dressmaker's bill in the world has been discovered on a Chaldean tablet, dating 2300 B. C. It has an entry of '92 pure vestments for the priests." Among the items are "ten white robes of the Temple, eight robes of the house of his lady, ten collars of the house of his lady, ten pair of gold collars, two white robes, and four scented robes." Also "two winders," probably scarfs for binding about the waist.

FIRE ALARM.—A novel system of fire alarm signals by rocket bombs has been established in the suburban districts of San Francisco to enable the remote engine houses quickly to summon assistance from the city forces in case of great emergency. A bomb, something like a rocket, is thrown 300 feet straight upward from a mortar, where it bursts, making a brilliant white light and a very loud explosion. At the trials of the system a short time ago, all San Francisco was excited and alarmed, fearing dynamiters were at work.

LEAP-YEAR.—It is commonly said that every year that is divisible by four is a leap-year; but, when the new style was introduced, special exception were made. Of the year's concluding centuries, only every fourth is a leap year. A year, though assumed to be exactly three hundred and sixty-five and a quarter days, is in reality three hundred and sixty-five days, five hours, forty-eight minutes and fifty seconds, or eleven minutes ten seconds less. It is to allow for this deficiency that the years 1700, 1800, and 1900 are not to be reckoned as leap years. 1896 will be a leap-year; but there will not be another till 1904.

DUTCH SMOKER.—The Hollanders are perhaps of all the Northern peoples those who smoke the most, writes the author of "Holland and Its People." The humidity of their climate makes it almost a necessity, and the very moderate cost of tobacco renders it accessible to all. To show how deeply rooted is the habit, it is enough to say that the boatmen of the trekschuit, the aquatic diligence of Holland, measure distances by smoke. From here, they say, to such-and-such a place it is not so many miles, but so many pipes. When you enter a house, after the first salutations, your host offers you a cigar; when you take leave, he hands you another.

BOAT-LIFE IN SIAM.—The boat-life of Siam includes almost all life. Business and pleasure, health and happiness, all centre in the river or its branches. A boat and a paddle are almost as natural and indispensable possessions to a Siamese as his arms or legs. He has no notion of traveling any distance except by boat, and the idea of living in a place inaccessible by water generally strikes him as absurd. Three weeks to come down stream with a full cargo, a week to dispose of it and indulge in the gaieties of the capital, four or five months to get back with the emptied boat, and the rest of the year for farm-work at home—such is the programme of many a Siamese family.

THE DINNER-HOUR.—In the fourteenth century the King of France dined at eight A. M., and retired to rest at eight P. M. In the time of Philip the Good an old verse said, "Rise at five, dine at nine, sup at five, go to bed at nine, and thou shalt live to be ninety-and-nine." In the reigns of Henry IV. and Louis XIV. the dinner-hour was eleven A. M. Louis XV. changed the dinner-hour to two o'clock. Two o'clock remained the usual dinner-hour in France up to the time of the Revolution, after which six o'clock became the fashionable time. In England the upper class breakfasted at seven in the reign of Henry VIII., and dined at ten A. M. In Elizabeth's reign the dinner-hour was eleven A. M., and supper was served about five o'clock. In Germany the fashionable hour for dinner up to the time of the French Revolution was twelve o'clock; afterwards it was fixed at one o'clock.

LOVE'S WHEREFORE.

BY T. FERGUSON.

I love you not because your face is fair—
A thousand faces fairer far may be, love;
I love you not for wealth of waving hair
And pure and tender lips that smile on me, love;
I care not for beauty, O my sweet,
Nor for your grace, nor if the world approve you;
But, soul and body, I am at your feet—
I love you!

You smile and wonder wherefore thus I care;
I only know I cannot change or alter.
If you were you and wore no longer fair,
The charm would hold, my faith could never falter;
Love has unwritten undiscoved laws;
And in my heart none else can rank above you.
I love you, O my darling, just because—
I love you!

IN PERIL'S MIDST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PENKIVEL," "OLIVE VARCOE," "BY CROOKED PATHS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.

BUT Vane had been keeping a close watch over her, and rose at once to accompany her, and, if possible, guard her.

"I say, Tempest," said Wally, as they proceeded to the dining-room, "awfully green, your cousin Mortimer! But I like him. How jolly good-looking he is! I say, there'll be a fluttering amongst the dovecots presently."

"Think so?" said Vane, forcing a smile. "Look after him, 'Baby,' will you? And—and don't forget that he's strange as yet, and rather shy."

"All right," said Lord Wally. "You trust him to me. I'll look after him like a mother."

Vane nodded.

"Nice kind of mother, you infant in arms! But see here; you may as well drop a hint to Dacre and the rest that my cousin doesn't play, and that he hasn't any money."

"You leave him to me," said Wally again, and still more emphatically, as he hurried forward to rejoin Nora, and linked his arm in hers.

"Come on, Mortimer; I'm going to be your guide, philosopher, and friend. If there's anything you want to know, ask me; and if there's anything you want to learn, I'll teach you—that is, if I know it myself; and I'm up to a good many things to my cost, from driving a four-in-hand to—to——"

"Potato-shying," said Nora demurely. "Perhaps we might begin with that, if it's not too difficult."

The "Baby" was delighted.

"Oh, come!" he said, his girlish face a rapture of smiles. "You aren't so green as you pretend. Come and sit at this table; you can get the best view here. Vane, there's room for you," he ran on, dragging a chair forward. "What on earth are you looking so glum and grave about this morning? Got a head on?"

Vane grinned, but in a very mirthless fashion, and, as he took his seat, wondered how long the comedy would last, and what the committee of the club would say when they came to know the deceit he was practicing upon them. He could very easily picture the scene of wild confusion, the storm of anger that would be the result, if by some look or word "Ernest Mortimer" revealed her true sex within the walls of the Cavalier!

He glanced now and again with barely-concealed anxiety at her, but there seemed to be an entire absence of anxiety on her part. She sat with her elbow on the table, a slight smile on her delicately-cut face, listening to the "Baby" as he rattled on, evidently for her special diversion; and when she spoke, answering some of the many questions which Lord Wally put to her, there was not a tremor in her low, clear voice.

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Quiet though she was, it was evident that Nora was making a remarkably favorable impression at the Cavaliers. Before luncheon was over several other men dropped in, mostly young fellows with plenty of money and no occupation save that of killing time, and Vane found himself introducing Ernest Mortimer right and left; and, indeed, if he had not done so, Lord Wally would. The "Baby" was quite fascinated by this other youth, whose face was handsomer, and whose voice was even softer and more girlish than the "Baby's" own.

After lunch he insisted upon Nora's going to the billiard-room, and receiving a first lesson in that fascinating game.

"Mortimer will play in no time," he assured Vane. "I can see he's got a jolly good eye, and that's the main thing, you know. You must drop in here to lunch as often as you can. Look here, will you come to-morrow?" he demanded eagerly.

Vane thought it well to take Nora away, and breathed a sigh of relief as they drove off.

"Phew!" he breathed. "I'm glad that's over! I've been on tenterhooks all the time."

"Why?" said Nora seriously.

"Why?" he echoed, as he sent the horse spinning homewards. "My dear gir—boy, we have been dancing on the edge of a volcano all the morning. Some of those young dev—fellows are as sharp as a needle, and I expected every moment to hear that you had been bowled out."

Nora thought for a moment.

"There was only one moment of danger," she said; "and that was when they asked to write my name. That was dangerous, if you like." She paused a moment, then said, "I must learn to read and write."

Vane groaned.

"Who's to teach you?" he said.

She looked up at him with charming naivete.

"Won't you?" she said.

"Good heavens, it's about all I can do myself!" he responded. "Never mind, I'll have a try."

"Perhaps if I can write and read I shall be able to earn more money," she remarked after a pause, during which she had evidently been thinking it over. "I have learnt a great deal this afternoon, Vane."

"I suppose so," he grunted.

"Yes," she said musingly. "It is all very strange. I had no idea people lived in such magnificent places as that club we have just left. It is like one of the palaces of the kings aunt used to read to me about. She used to read a great deal, especially in the winter when there was no fishing."

"I see," said Vane; "and that's how you picked up so much, and manage to speak so well?"

"Do I speak well?" she said, with a pleased expression in her eyes.

"Rattling well," he responded; "better than most of us."

"I'm glad of that," she said fervently. "I should like to speak like a lady—I mean a gentleman, and not like a common person."

Vane leant back and laughed.

"You needn't be afraid," he said; "you look every inch a gentleman, and speak like one. If you hadn't our fellows would have spotted you sharp enough; even the 'Baby,' who, for all his infantile ways, is as sharp as any of them."

She laughed softly.

"I like him," she said. "He is such a boy, and he is a great lord, isn't he, Vane?"

Vane nodded.

"Yes, and on the way to being a very great one—that is, as far as money and land go."

"Yes." She grew thoughtful, and was evidently pondering on all she had heard and seen that morning. "And yet he pelts cabmen with hot potatoes. What funny people, and what a funny place this London is!"

"Yes; but it's only the wild ones that go in for that kind of thing," he felt compelled to remark. "The 'Baby' will grow up and settle down. He'll marry and attend the House of Lords regularly and—and be quite a different man."

She thought a moment, then seemed to grasp the idea. It was wonderful how quick she was.

"I see!" she said thoughtfully, and lapsed into silence.

They reached St. James' street just in time to dress, and Nora went straight to her room. Vane had a very bad quarter of an hour, as the French say, while Porter was inducting him into his evening attire.

"We dine out, after all, Porter," he said.

"Yes, sir," said Porter. "Shall I see about Mr. Mortimer's clothes? I shall have plenty of time."

"No, no," said Vane. "He isn't accustomed to a valet, and he'll get on all right; don't bother about him."

And again as he spoke he wondered whether it was possible for the girl to pass through the ordeal before her. It was all very well at the Cavaliers. There had been only men there, but she would have to face Lady Florence presently—Lady Florence, whose calm, sharp eyes might at any moment detect a flaw in the armor of deceit.

But half-an-hour later Nora came into the sitting-room as self-possessed and serene as if she were on the cliffs of the Witch's Cauldron.

Vane noticed as she entered that she copied Lord Walter Raymond's bearing and manner exactly, and he smiled approval.

"'Pon my word, I think you'll pull through!" he said admiringly. "But for goodness sake be careful, Ernest."

She smiled, and leant against the mantel-shelf in the attitude he had shown her.

"I am not at all afraid," she said—"that is, if they don't ask me to read anything, or write my name. And it won't be long before I am able to do that."

"All right," said Vane encouragingly. "Keep a sharp look out though, and don't forget that you are going to meet one of your own sex."

"I am not afraid," she said again—"that is, while you are near, Vane."

Vane nodded.

"Fortunately I shall always be near," he said.

Porter announced that the brougham was ready, and Nora followed Vane downstairs.

The carriage called forth an exclamation of astonishment and admiration from her.

"What a beautiful little carriage, and these linings are all silk!" she said. "Why——" she looked at Vane with a puzzled frown, "you can't be so very poor!"

"This isn't mine," said Vane. "I only hire—rent it. You'll understand all about it after a time."

"Yes?" she said. "There seems so much to understand."

Lord Warlock held one of the much-coveted houses in Carlton terrace, and as the brougham rolled smoothly along Nora looked out in silent wonder at the big houses and palatial clubs, and imposing and gaily-lit shops, and presently a small hand stole into Vane's.

He pressed it reassuringly.

"Keep up your spirits, Ernest," he whispered, encouragingly and warningly. "Look here, if you are frightened, and would rather not go on, we'll go back. I'll send an excuse."

"No, no," she said under her breath. "The—the lights and the rows of big houses and the people frightened me for a moment, that's all. No, let us go on."

Notwithstanding his anxiety and disquietude of mind, Vane could not but admire the courage of the untaught, half-barbaric child of the wild west coast, and he pressed her hand again and drew her nearer to him.

For a moment it seemed as if she would let her head droop upon his breast, but she recovered herself in an instant and sat bolt upright.

The brougham stopped, and a footman in the well-known Warlock livery opened the door and ushered them into the hall.

It seemed to Nora to be crowded with footmen, although, as a matter of fact, there were only four or five. One went to Vane to take off his dress inverness, another took Nora's middy cap from her, while a third stood like a sentinel to usher them to the drawing-room.

The hall was not so large as that of the Cavaliers, but there was a certain something in its appearance and atmosphere which impressed Nora more than the club hall had done; perhaps it was the silent, machine-like movement of the richly-liveried servants.

She followed Vane into the drawing-room.

A tall, thin old man, with "gentleman," "aristocratic" writ large all over him, stood before the marble fireplace. He extended a swollen hand to Vane, and emitted something between a grunt and a growl.

"How do, Tempest?" he said, not altogether unpleasantly. "Very kind of you to come. I've had a touch of this deuced gout. Always do at this time of the year. Ever had it? No? Well, you will. All the Westleighs have it. Who's this?" and he stared at Nora, who stood just behind Vane with downcast eyes.

"My cousin, Ernest Mortimer," said Vane.

He had got hardened by this time and spoke without a falter.

"Mortimer, Mortimer?" said the earl. "Don't remember any Mortimer in your family. No matter."

He extended a couple of fingers to Nora, who took them and shook them.

"Ought to have been amongst the birds by this time," growled the earl; "but this beastly political business keeps me. The country's going to the dogs—the dogs! Mortimer, Mortimer?" he bent his shaggy brows upon Nora. "Why the deuce don't I remember him?"

"A distant branch," said Vane.

"Oh! Looks like a confounded sailor," muttered the earl.

"He is," said Vane. "Just left his ship."

"Ah! Navy's going to the deuce. No ships, no men. We shall be in a deuce of a hole presently. What's the name of your ship, Mr.—Mr.—Mr.——"

"The Neptune," replied Nora in her low, musical voice.

The old earl bent towards her.

"The what? Neptune? Don't know it. But, there, I don't know a quarter of the ships afloat."

He glared at the clock and looked round the room impatiently.

"Where's Lady Florence?" he demanded irritably. "It's a strange thing that I can't have the few meals I eat at home served at the proper time. Talk of slaves, we're the slaves of our cooks and footman—yes, our very footmen! I wish to heaven I lived in a cottage by myself!"

At this moment the door opened, and Lady Florence entered.

Never, in the wildest moment of her imagination, had she ever imagined anything so lovely so grand, so overpowering, as this woman of fashin who sailed, glided, into the room in all her magnificence of evening dress.

Lady Florence wore one of Worth's master-pieces—a robe of faint mauve-tinted satin, trimmed with cream-colored lace, so delicate in texture that it looked as if it had been spun by a spider. Pearls, arranged coronet fashion, gleamed softly in her golden hair and on her white neck and arms; and the Warlock diamond, a priceless gem, shone fiercely in the bosom of her dress.

Nora felt as if she must almost screen her eyes, and did actually put up her small brown hand as the imperious beauty swept into the room.

How was it possible, indeed, that Nora should ever have heard or dreamed of such a creature as this?

She gazed at the vision of loveliness and then glanced at Vane.

And he met the glance with one of warning and caution.

Florence gave her hand to Vane without a word—just a smile of welcome; then turned to Nora.

"How kind of you to come!" she said.

That was all.

But the liquid, ice like tones seemed to ring and ring in Nora's ears. She could speak no word of response.

"Dinner is served, my lady," said the grave butler.

But Lady Florence merely inclined her head and did not move.

"What on earth are we waiting for?" demanded Lord Warlock with gouty impatience.

As he spoke the footman opened the door and announced—

"Mr. Senley Tyers."

Vane felt surprised, and must have looked it, for Senley Tyers smiled and raised his brows slightly, as much to say—"Yes, it is I. Wonderful, isn't it?"

The earl put up his gold eyeglasses.

"Who the deuce is this?" he muttered to no one in particular, but quite loud enough to be heard by the last arrival.

Vane saw Senley Tyers glance at the fiery old man, and then look steadily at Lady Florence, and it seemed to him as if the cold, cynical eyes assumed an expression almost of command. For a moment he fancied that her eyes drooped under the direct gaze; but he told himself that it must be fancy only.

Lady Florence turned to her father.

"Mr. Senley Tyers, the artist, papa," she said. "He is a great friend of Mr. Tempest."

"Eh?" said the earl. "How do you do? Is there anyone else to wait for?"

This ought to have made Mr. Tyers uncomfortable, but it did not appear to have the least effect upon him, and he nodded with his usual half-cynical composure to Vane, then sauntered towards a Rembrandt, and, with his hands behind his back, examined it leisurely.

"For heaven's sake let us get some dinner if we are all here!" said the earl, and he signed to Vane to take Lady Florence.

As they passed in, Vane instinctly glanced over his shoulder at Nora, and Lady Florence smiled.

"Your cousin is all right," she said. "You were quite right, he is very shy."

"Isn't he?" said Vane with a sudden

flush. "He is a nice boy, and I hope you will like him."

"Oh, I daresay," she said with listless indifference. Then her tone changed—"I was afraid you would find it dull to-night," she said, "and it occurred to me when I was at Mr. Tyers' studio this afternoon that I might as well ask him."

"That was very kind of you," said Vane. "But you might have asked him for his own sake; he is a wonderfully clever and entertaining man, as I daresay you have found out by this time."

Her lips came together, and her violent eyes were screened by their lids for a moment.

"Yes, I suppose he is clever," she said.

Nora followed with the earl and the artist into the dining-room.

It was a magnificent apartment; but its wonderful decorations, the rare pictures, the small round table with the rich plate and costly glass glittering in the light of the wax candles, were lost upon Nora—Lady Florence seemed to block out everything else in her vision.

She had scarcely noticed Senley Tyers; and when he spoke, and she looked up and recognized him, she felt a strange sensation of repulsion mingling with her surprise.

She had been comparatively at her ease at the Cavaliers; but the subdued air of the room, the noiseless movements of the servants, the regal splendor of Lady Florence, confused and bewildered her, and now she felt the cold, keen gaze of Senley Tyers' dark eyes as an added weight.

"You are not often in London, I think you said?" he remarked as he unfolded his table napkin.

Nora did not remember having said anything of the kind to him, but she thought she must have done, and forgotten it in her confusion.

"This is my first visit," she replied.

"Indeed," he said. "How strange you must find it all! When did you leave your ship?"

He spoke in the leisurely tone with which a grown man addresses a lad ignorant of the world, and Nora as she listened felt that already she was beginning to hate him.

"Not long," she said.

He seemed to listen with a sudden increase of attention.

"What is the name of your ship?" he inquired.

"The Neptune," replied Nora, her eyes fixed on Vane that she might see which spoon to use and what dish to accept or refuse; the number of knives and forks and glasses embarrassed her by nearly the same number at the club.

"Do you like the Navy?" asked Senley Tyers after a pause, during which the soup was served.

Nora hesitated a moment.

"I am in the Merchant Service," she said coldly.

Senley Tyers looked at her out of the corners of his eyes.

How did a cousin of Vane Tempest, a connection of the great Westleighs, come to be in the Merchant Service?

"You are away on leave, I suppose?" he said.

Nora felt her heart beginning to beat fiercely at this persistent questioning, and her dark brows came together. She did the unwisest thing she could have done and pretended not to hear the question. If she had simply answered "Yes" or "No" Senley Tyers would have left her alone; but when no reply came he glanced at her and saw that her color had risen and that her eyes were flashing, and knew that she had shirked his interrogation.

And though he turned from her and addressed Lady Florence he watched her closely.

Most men would have seen nothing suspicious in the handsome lad, and attributed his silence to a not unbecoming shyness, but Senley Tyers possessed the mind of a detective, and just now was on the look out for anything, any incident or circumstance in Vane Tempest's life which he, Senley Tyers, might be able to turn to advantage.

Vane leant forward.

"I was just asking Lady Florence if she wasn't tired of sitting for her portrait," he said.

"Quite, I am afraid," said Tyers with a smile, then he looked at her, and waited.

Vane expected her to say, with her usual hauteur, "More than tired"; but instead she said, with a sudden drooping of the eyes—

"No, I am not: it is very interesting."

Senley Tyers leaned back as if he had got what he wanted.

"Lady Florence is too kind, and patience itself. Yes, the picture has been a long time in hand, but the dress—by the way, I have to thank you for suggesting it, Tempest—is an elaborate one and means a vast amount of work."

"And glory, when the portrait comes to be exhibited," said Vane.

The conversation thus started ran on Art lines, and Senley Tyers, exerting himself, talked well. Lady Florence joined in now and again; and to Vane's surprise, seemed to listen with something like deference. Every now and then he looked over to Nora and managed to convey a smile of encouragement; but everyone else seemed to have forgotten her, Lord Warlock, as usual, devoting the whole of his attention to the dinner and growling at intervals at some dish or wine.

Suddenly, so suddenly as to make Nora start, he said—

"You are eating nothing and drinking less, my lad. When I was your age I shouldn't have passed that last entree."

Nora colored and looked down, and the earl signed to the footman to bring the dish back.

"There," he said gruffly, but not unkindly, "don't tell me you don't like it. Every boy likes good things, and this happens to be decent, for a marvel. Let me see, what's your name—Mortimer? Knew a Mortimer once. You're not like him though. Too good-looking. What's that they are talking about? Art? Pooh, there is no Art nowadays! All the painters are dead, so are the actors. Painting and acting and everything else have gone to the dogs. And so you are a cousin of Vane Tempest's, are you? And he's looking after you, I suppose?" he chuckled as if the idea seemed an amusing one. "By gad, if you follow in his footsteps you'll need looking after by someone else." He glanced across the table at Vane and chuckled again. "'Pon my word, I'm sorry for you. He's about the worst example you could have."

"Why?" asked Nora, opening her eyes wide upon him.

The old earl stared at her as if he were going to have a fit, then shook his head, and turned his attention to his plate again, as if the question and the questioner were too hopelessly innocent.

Soon after the appearance of the dessert Lady Florence rose, and Nora, remembering Vane's instructions went to the door and opened it for her.

Lady Florence bestowed a faint smile upon her, and Nora bowed, and as she passed back to her place she heard Vane breathe a sigh of relief.

"Vane, port?" said the earl, handing him the decanter. "I suppose you will have some? You haven't the gout yet, you lucky young beggar," he said to Nora.

Nora half filled her glass and sipped it, and Lord Warlock eyed her with grim amusement.

"Well, you are the most abstemious sailor I ever met with," he remarked, "but I suppose you prefer hot grog and a short pipe to '48 port, and I don't know that you're wrong. If I'd stuck to gin and water instead of this"—he tapped the decanter with his gouty knuckles—"I shouldn't be a cripple in the prime of my life."

Nora smiled faintly.

"Oh!" he exclaimed shortly, "you think I'm old, do you?" He sighed, and, leaning back, looked at her wistfully. "So I am, boy; very old, and very tired and worn out——"

"In his country's service," murmured Senley Tyers.

The earl glanced at him from under his brows.

"What the deuce do you know about it?" he muttered; and, sinking back, relapsed into silence for a quarter of an hour, during which he appeared to have forgotten the presence of his guests. At the end of that time he roused and looked round, and uttered the formula—"Shall we join Lady Florence?" and struggled, with the aid of the back of his chair, to his feet.

Instinctively Nora put out her hand to help him, and, after a moment's hesitation, during which she thought he meant to refuse her assistance, he laid his hand on her shoulder.

"Thanks, youngster," he said, leaning on her rather heavily. "Humph! you are stronger than you look."

Nora smiled up at him.

"I am very strong," she said.

"And as straight as an arrow," he muttered. "Help me to that chair, and then go and amuse yourself. By gad, you'll find it precious dull, I expect. Here, Vane, come and talk to me."

Vane went to him at once, and sat beside him, and Nora, left to herself, found a seat at a little distance.

Lady Florence was at the piano, playing softly and at random, and Senley Tyers crossed the room with his noiseless step, and stood beside her.

She had in the mirror seen him approaching, and as he drew near her lips grew tighter, and a strained expression came into her face.

"You did well to ask me here to-night, Lady Florence," he said in a low voice, and pointing to a piece of music as if he were merely asking her to play or sing.

She was silent a moment, then she said, "Why?"

"Because by so doing you have ratified the compact between us."

"I knew of no compact," she said, almost between her closed teeth.

"Ah, it is not for me to contradict you," he said smoothly. "Let us say that I—and you—only dreamed the little dramatic scene which took place in my studio. Let us say that it was only in imagination that I offered you my humble assistance towards the realization of your dearest wish."

She opened her lips, and turned her eyes upon him with a proud defiance and indignation flashing in them; but the flash faded, the eyes fell, beneath the keen, cool gaze of his. Lady Florence had lost her power over him, and she knew it.

"I am not fond of melodrama even in its proper place—the theatre—Mr. Tyers," she said, with an attempt at scornful irony.

"Nor I," he said, "and I rarely indulge in it. You are quite right when you accuse me of having done so the day I pretended to destroy Vane Tempest's picture, and discovered your secret; but you will admit that it was very successful melodrama. You will find that it has a very practical purpose. I am terribly in earnest, Lady Florence, when I am in earnest—which is seldom—and I make no vain boast when I offer you my assistance."

She forced a smile.

"You said all this in your studio," she rejoined; "and I think that I reminded you that even supposing your romantic supposition were correct, and that I——"

"Loved Vane Tempest," he murmured.

Her proud face became suffused, and she seemed as if struggling for breath.

"You are too ridiculous," she faltered. "But——" she shrugged her shoulder, "how could she have helped me?"

"Pardon me, but that is my part of the contract."

"And mine!" she said. "What does that consist of—if you insist upon playing at theatricals?"

"Simply this," he said.

He drew a sheet of paper from his pocket-book quite openly, and laid it on the keys of the piano. Anyone noticing the action might easily have concluded that he was submitting a sketch for her inspection.

She looked down at it with a scornful smile, then picked it up and examined it. These words written in Senley Tyers' artistic scrawl—

"I, Florence Tempest, owe Senley Tyers one thousand pounds."

Signed—

She dropped the paper with a contemptuous laugh.

"Oh, I understand," he said with a smile. "It is an old trick, and has done duty in many a play. Besides why do I not make it a larger sum? And why, again, do I not, after the usual fashion of needy adventurers—because that is what I am, am I not, Lady Florence?—ask for payment in advance?"

"Yes," she said scornfully, "you have read my thoughts with tolerable correctness, Mr. Tyers."

"Exactly. Will you forgive me if I reply that the answer to these questions is part of my scheme. Come, why should you not sign? It commits you to nothing, unless you became the wife of my dear friend. It is made out in the name of Florence Tempest, not Heathcote; you shall sign it in the same way. If you never become Florence Tempest, then—" he shrugged his shoulders—"my poor little bonus is lost, my little paper just waste-paper."

She shook her head.

"Good!" he said, as if her refusal were final and closed the matter. "I can quite understand your disbelief in my power; it is only natural. But, Lady Florence, when I go to-night I take with me your only chance of becoming Vane Tempest's wife."

She raised her eyes and met his; a faint shudder ran through her, and, as if the movement cost her an agony, she took the paper from him.

"Sign it!" he said in a low voice.

An inkstand of Venetian crystal stood on a table near him; he took up a pen and handed it to her.

As he did so, Vane strolled up to them.

"What are you two conspiring?" he said with a smile.

Senley Tyers leant against the piano so that he almost hid Lady Florence from Vane's view.

"Lady Florence is signing the order permitting me to exhibit her portrait," he said. He turned to her with a smile. "Have you finished, Lady Florence?"

She raised her eyes, opened her lips as if about to defy him, then her head drooped; she signed the paper rapidly, and handed it to him.

"Thanks," he said, and he bowed almost humbly.

* * * * * *

Nora sat in her corner with the photograph album as still as a mouse, but with eyes as sharp as that peculiarly alert little animal.

She saw the whole of the business between Lady Florence and Senley Tyers, and watched the changing expressions on the beautiful face; but though her woman's wits made her suspicious, she was too ignorant of the world and its wiles to understand. She only thought that if she were the proud beauty she would not have permitted Mr. Tyers to bend over her, and talk in such low and confidential tones; for, be it noted, Nora's dislike and distrust of that accomplished gentleman attained greater proportions every moment.

As Vane went up to Lady Florence, Senley Tyers walked away and stood by the fire, and Nora, watching him, saw him with a peculiar air of satisfaction. While she was watching him he turned, in his softly sudden fashion, and met the gaze of her bright eyes, and, as if reminded of her existence, he crossed the room and approached her.

Nora bent over her photograph album and knit her brows, on her guard in a moment, and determined to say as little to him as possible.

Senley Tyers drew up a chair beside her.

"Have you found some interesting photos, Mr. Mortimer?" he said. His voice was particularly soft and pleasant; but, nevertheless, it jarred upon Nora, and caused her brows to grow straighter.

"Yes," she said, in a tone that did not invite further questions; but Mr. Senley Tyers always met a repulse with bland persistence.

"What are they—views?" he asked. "Let me see. Ah, yes; Lord Warlock has been abroad a good deal; he was Secretary for the Colonies at one period of his useful career, and has traveled much. I suppose you know some of these places? Where did the Neptune sail to last?"

"To Australia," replied Nora shortly.

"Ah, yes," he said; "delightful trip! How I envy you! Of course you saw Sydney? There ought to be a photograph of it here."

He turned the pages of the album.

"Tell me if you recognize it. Ah, here it is! Is it a good view?"

Nora felt her color coming and going.

"I—don't know," she said. "I didn't go ashore."

Senley Tyers glanced at her out of the corner of his eyes.

"Oh, oh!" he said with a smile; "then you had been misbehaving yourself, I'm afraid, and were kept on board for punishment, Mr. Mortimer. Was that it?"

Nora's face went scarlet, and an indignant denial rose to her lips; but she checked it, and looked guilty.

Senley Tyers laughed. To inflict mental pain was a much-valued amusement of his, and he promised himself unlimited enjoyment of that kind to be got out of Vane's mysterious cousin.

"Let me see," he said; "they don't flog now in the Merchant Service, do they? It's a mistake, I fancy. I daresay you youngsters would infinitely prefer a few lashes from the cat o'-nine tails to being kept abroad when the ship's in port?"

Nora still hung her head; but her face was pale now, and the delicate nostrils were distended, the clear-cut lips tightly pressed together.

Senley Tyers watched her with a smile that suddenly fled from his face and left it acutely supicious; he saw that a tear was forcing itself from under the lowered lid next him.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

EVERY intelligent man and woman can teach something to others and learn something from them, and we make a fatal mistake when we ignore those whose literary attainments have been less than our own. A broad culture in its true sense is always conscious of its own ignorance and anxious to repair it, while it is too generous to refrain from giving of its own stores to those who need.

THE BROOK.

BY EUGENE FIELD.

I looked in the brook and saw a face;
Heigh-ho, but a child was I!
There were rushes and willows in that place,
And they clutched at the brook as the brook ran by;
And the brook it ran its own sweet way,
As a child doth run in heedless play,
And as it run I heard it say:
"Hasten with me
To the roistering sea
That is wroth with the flame of the morning sky!"

I look in the brook and see a face;
Heigh-ho, but the years go by!
The rushes are dead in the old-time place,
And the willows I know when a child I was I;
And the brook it seemeth to me to say,
As ever it stealeth on its way,
Solemnly now, and in play:
"Oh, come with me
To the slumbrous sea
That is gay with the peace of the evening sky!"

Heigh-ho, but the years go by—
I would to God that a child were I!

A False Alarm.

BY A. E. A.

CHAPTER I.

IT was a wet autumn day. Since early morning the rain had been beating against the stone mullioned windows of Rawnsley Grange with unrelenting fury. The wind was howling down the chimney and under the ill-fitting old doors with a sound suggestive of the depth of water.

"If this goes on much longer I shall commit suicide!" exclaimed Mrs. Rawnsley, looking out of the window for the tenth time in the vain hope of seeing a break in the clouds.

She was young, and very pretty, though at the present moment her eyes were full of tears, and her whole person expressive of the deepest dejection.

A stranger might have imagined that she was the victim of a life-long sorrow, but in reality her depression was entirely due to the fact that she had passed a very wet morning by herself.

"What can that be? Surely I heard the sound of wheels?" she cried suddenly. "Robert must have changed his mind again and come home! What can have happened?"

Mrs. Rawnsley hurried into the hall just as a shabby old fly drove up to the door. A gentleman enveloped in a heavy fur coat jumped out and rang the bell. She stopped on seeing that the new arrival was not her husband, and was retreating towards the drawing-room, when she was arrested by the sound of a well-known voice.

"Phil!" she cried, running forward with outstretched hands, "I can't believe my eyes! Why, I thought you were in Paris!"

"So I shall be to-morrow," replied the young man, who with the help of the servant was struggling out of his many wraps. "I only came over to England on business, and finding that I had to wait a short time at Bogford I took a cab and drove over to see you for half an hour."

"Half an hour!" reiterated Mrs. Rawnsley blankly; "why I hoped you had come on a visit."

"Very kind of you, my dear Isabel, but it is quite impossible. My work compels me to be in Paris to-morrow evening at the latest."

Then they both burst out laughing. Mr. Philip Digby was attached to the British Embassy in Paris, and at one time his duties had appeared mainly to consist in escorting his pretty cousin Isabel to balls, and providing her with the most splendid bouquets that could be procured for money. But a great many things had happened since then.

"Do you know I have not seen you since your wedding-day?" observed Mr. Digby, as he carefully selected the largest and softest armchair and drew it close to the drawing-room fire. "I suppose you have forgotten that winter in Paris? Why, it must be nearly two years ago!"

"My dear boy! I have forgotten nothing that happened during that delightful time. Ah! that is the place to enjoy oneself!" and Mrs. Rawnsley sighed softly. Although married to a man she adored, and mistress of a charming old manor-house within a mile of the most desirable cathedral town in England, she still looked back to the old Paris days with a faint tinge of regret. There were undoubtedly solid advantages about the present, but it lacked the merriment of the past.

"Now don't waste time," she continued, "but tell me about all our friends. First of all, who has succeeded to my place in your affections?"

"Ah! that would be too long a story! You have had so many successors! But I will do my best to give you a sketch of my latest conquests," said Mr. Digby, twisting up his little black moustache. He was very handsome in a miniature style and deliberately affected a self-complacent manner which some people declared intolerable.

Half an hour was gone long before the cousins had exhausted their numerous topics of interest. Suddenly Phil looked at his watch and jumped up with an expression of annoyance.

"I shall miss my train, if I don't look out, he said, "for that old horse goes like a snail. Good-bye, my dear Isabel. So glad to have seen you installed in your home. Very nice for those who like old oak wainscotings and lattice windows. I can't stand them myself, but I believe I am peculiar. By-the-bye, is Rawnsley about? Perhaps it would be civil to tell him I'm here!"

"He's away," said Isabel, stiffly.

Mr. Digby responded to this announcement with a little gesture of amusement.

"How long have you been married? More than a year? A bit tired of it at times, arn't you? I know I should be, so I leave well alone. Here—you must see me off at the door; it's the least you can do when I have come all this way to see you. Beastly climate, isn't it?" You had better follow me back to Paris and make acquaintance with the sun again."

"I wish I could," sighed Mrs. Rawnsley; "but I am afraid it is impossible."

"Oh, I don't know; stranger things have happened. Mind, I shall be only too happy if at any time you can manage it," said Phil, carefully lighting his cigar before stepping into the fly. In another moment he was out of sight.

CHAPTER II.

THE empty drawing-room looked more dreary than ever when Isabel returned to it alone. She sank down on the sofa with a groan of utter weariness, and buried her face in her hands. However, hardly had she settled herself to cry comfortably, when the door burst open, and in rushed a girl in a dripping waterproof.

"My dear Isabel! What are you doing?" she panted, pulling off her wet gloves and throwing her cloak in a heap on the floor. "I do believe you have been crying! No wonder, left all by yourself in this miserable weather. I call it a horrid shame of your husband to go away like this. I know I wouldn't stand it!"

Miss Julia Grant was a very downright young woman, and prided herself on speaking out her mind without any regard to conventionalities. At one time she and Isabel had been inseparable companions, but the marriage of the latter had produced a slight breach in their friendship, although they lived at no great distant apart.

Mr. Rawnsley was many years older than his wife, and a man of quiet literary tastes. From the first he had taken great exception to Miss Grant's manners, his enmity dating from his wedding-day, when she had playfully slapped him on the back coming out of church. It was one of Julia's little failings that she never could quite discern who appreciated these light-hearted habits, and who regarded them with intense aversion.

"Well, my dear Isabel," she continued, throwing herself into the armchair lately vacated by Mr. Digby, and planting two dripping boots on the brightly-polished fender, "you don't look very festive, I must say! Evidently you are feeling thoroughly low by yourself in this wretched weather. Now I have a capital plan to propose. We came into Bogford by train this morning, as the horse was lame. Mamma was going to lunch at the Deanery and pay calls all the afternoon, so I just ate a bun at the pastrycook's and walked off to see you."

"You walked in all this rain!" interrupted Mrs. Rawnsley, with astonishment.

"Yes—don't I look like it?" replied Julia, glancing down at her steaming boots. "Well, I can't stop long; I'm in a desperate hurry—in fact, I ran most of the way, and didn't even wait to ring the door-bell. I want you to come back with us this evening and stay a couple of days, to help in some theatricals we are getting up in the village—an impromptu affair, but it will be great fun, as we have lots of jolly people coming. Now make up your mind at once! It's perfect nonsense mop ing here by yourself when your husband is away!"

"I should like it of all things," said Mrs. Rawnsley undecidedly; "only I don't quite know when Robert returns. I expected him to-day, and then he sent a telegram to say he wasn't coming. He has gone somewhere to consult some authority on something, and I don't know how long it will take him."

"Surely he was away last time I came over?" interposed Miss Grant.

"Ah, yes! You know he is writing an encyclopedia, or a dictionary, or something of that kind, and all his time is taken up going about verifying facts."

"Isabel," said Miss Grant, solemnly, "you're a fool!"

Mrs. Rawnsley only smiled. She was too well-accustomed to her friend's forcible language to take any offence.

"Yes," continued Julia, with great energy, "you are a perfect idiot if you submit to being treated like this! Just show your husband that you intend to enjoy yourself, irrespective of him, and he will think twice as much of you. Why, he was attentive enough when you were first married, until he found out that you would stand any amount of neglect. Now, take my advice for once! Come and enjoy the theatricals without bothering your head whether he comes home or not. It will be a capital joke, and just give him a lesson! He will be more careful how long he leaves you alone another time."

"I hope I shan't make him angry," said Mrs. Rawnsley. "I wouldn't do that for the world! I know he doesn't mean to neglect me. It's only that tiresome old book——"

"Angry!" interrupted Julia. "Well, if you are too afraid of him for a little joke of that sort of course there's nothing more to be said. But I didn't think he was such a tyrant as all that."

"Don't talk nonsense!" replied Isabel hotly. "Of course I am not afraid of him. I shall come to the theatricals—that's settled. You are going back by the 5.20 train? I will meet you at the station; or rather, you had better wait and drive there with me."

"I can't do that," said Julia, tugging on her half-dry gloves. "I must do a lot of shopping before I start, but I shall expect to see you at the station. Mind, we shall never forgive you if you throw us over at the last. No! don't ring for the butler to let me out, I hate the pompous old brute! Here, this is the quickest way," and she threw open the window and stepped out, regardless of her friend's cry of dismay as all the small articles on the drawing-room table blew on to the floor.

Left to herself, Isabel's courage rather failed her. It was the first time that she had ever acted independently of her husband, for she was devotedly attached to him, and inordinately proud of his literary attainments—in spite of the disrespectful way in which she alluded to them before Julia.

She had never suspected before that she was in the least to be pitied, and it was quite a new light to her that her friends regarded her as a victim. The weather was intensely depressing, and the sight of Philip had brought back a train of old associations.

"What a merry life it was in Paris!" she thought, "and how I used to be petted and spoilt! No end to the pleasures and excitements of those days! Rather different from sitting all alone, hour after hour, in this gloomy old house, with no companions but the mice scampering about behind the wainscotings. The memory of the mice decided her. "It's really too bad of Robert to leave me," she said. "I can't stand another evening alone with the mice!" And, ringing the bell, she hurriedly ordered the carriage without allowing herself the time to change her mind again.

CHAPTER III.

ARE we to expect you home to-morrow, ma'am?" inquired the butler, as he held open the carriage door. "And is there any message for the master if he returns whilst you are out?"

"No, none," said Mrs. Rawnsley shortly. "I may return to-morrow, but it is improbable. To the station now," and she jumped into the brougham and pulled up the window with childish petulance.

"Horrid old man!" she thought; "I won't gratify his curiosity to know where I am going! What a bore old family servants are! They always seem to have an impression that they ought to be informed of one's plans directly they are made. Stokes is always interfering, and I really believe he has never forgiven me for destroying the bachelor establishment over which he had presided for so many years. As for leaving a message for Robert, I fondly hope he won't be back before I am, and anyway it would rather annoy him to hear that I had gone to the Grants'. He certainly is a little unreasonable about poor Julia! Of course she is rough, but how kind it was of her to tramp all that way in the wet merely because she thought I was lonely! No! I can't give up such an old friend just because of Robert's fancies, and he will quite understand how the sudden plan came about when I explain it to him myself. I daresay he will think it an excellent joke!"

Unfortunately, Mr. Rawnsley took quite a different view of the case when he returned home on the following day. In vain he looked in every direction, as he approached the house, expecting to see his wife anxiously awaiting his return on the doorstep, as she had invariably done on former occasions.

"Where is your mistress, Stoke?" he inquired as the old servant took his hat in the hall. "She is quite well, I hope? Nothing the matter?"

"Not that I know of, sir! She left home yesterday."

"Left home?" interrupted Mr. Rawnsley. "What do you mean? Where did she go?"

"That's just what we none of us know, sir."

"But when does she return? Surely she left some message for me?" said Mr. Rawnsley with growing anxiety.

"She left no message, sir, and didn't say anything about coming back. She didn't even take the maid, and directly the porter took out her luggage at the station she told the coachman to go home, so he couldn't even see by what train——"

"That will do," interrupted Mr. Rawnsley harshly; "no doubt it's all right, and she will be here presently. Dinner at eight, and don't disturb me in the library until then unless your mistress arrives."

It is to be doubted whether Mr. Rawnsley accomplished much work that afternoon, although he covered his writing-table with formidable looking volumes and conscientiously tried to master their contents.

In spite of all his efforts to fix his attention, his eyes were perpetually wandering to the face of the clock, his ears continually straining to catch the sound of a light footstep that never came.

However he successfully dissembled his anxiety before the servants, and when Stokes came to ask if dinner should be kept waiting, he affected to look up from his book with a start, as if unconscious of how the time had passed.

"I will have dinner at once. Your mistress must be coming by the last train. Order the carriage to go down and meet it, and tell the housekeeper to have something ready for her about eleven o'clock," he said, speaking with more certainty than he felt. But on no account would he have betrayed the slightest uneasiness about his wife's movements.

"Besides she must be coming home to-night," he argued to himself, "or she would have written to me. She may have left a note that has been mislaid; there is sure to be some very simple explanation of it, after all."

When dinner was over he again made a pretence of continuing his work in the library, but it was with difficulty that he could keep up even a show of interest in his studies.

"It's strange how I miss Isabel's presence in the room," he reflected. "There was a time when I could work so much better by myself, and now I feel as if I could not settle to anything until I see her there," and he glanced at a low chair by the side of the fire which was his wife's favorite seat during the long evenings when he was absorbed in his writing.

Often he did not speak to her for hours, and no one would ever have suspected how constantly his eyes rested for a moment in admiration on the little golden head that nestled back so gracefully amongst the cushions.

Isabel herself always believed that he forgot her very existence when occupied with his books, but that, she imagined, was a penalty inseparable from marrying a husband much cleverer than herself. And of course he never undeceived her. It was enough to have electrified all his friends by suddenly marrying a pretty child of twenty without making himself still further ridiculous by an unlimited display of affection.

To do him justice he never suspected that Isabel would have preferred more demonstrative behavior. She never complained of feeling dull, and it struck Mr. Rawnsley for the first time that evening

that it must be rather dreary work for a young girl to sit alone night after night, in that gloomy old house, when he was away from home.

He quite resolved to be more sociable in the future, to leave her less to herself, if it were compatible with his other plans. And when she came home—which would be very soon, for the mail was due in five minutes—he would put away his books and try to take an interest in what she had been doing. It was very inconsiderate of her not be there to meet him, but he would pass that over with the slightest possible reproof in his pleasure at getting her safely back again.

So he fidgeted about the room, comparing his watch with the clock, and referring anxiously to Bradshaw to be sure that there was no mistake about the train, until at last it was impossible to buoy himself up any longer with false hopes. The mail had gone up full half-an-hour, the carriage had long since driven round to the stable yard, and yet there were no signs of Isabel. A chill foreboding of evil began to creep over him.

CHAPTER IV.

AFTER a time the sound of shuffling footsteps and whispering voices in the passage aroused Mr. Rawnsley from his melancholy reflections. In the stillness of the night he could hear a muffled controversy going on outside the door. He felt a conviction that he was about to receive bad news, and, sitting down by the writing-table, he prepared himself to hear the worst.

There had been an accident, and Isabel was killed. He felt as certain of it as if he had seen her dead body lying before him. And, at the same moment, by a curious freak of fancy, he remembered how lovely she had looked when he met her for the first time at a ball to which he had been unwillingly persuaded to go.

How gracefully she danced, and how she enjoyed herself! Her face had struck him as the very impersonation of childish mirth. He had never seen her dance since—for they were married a few weeks later—and he had made her clearly understand from the first that his time was too valuable to be wasted in going to parties.

The door opened softly. Mr. Rawnsley looked up and saw Stokes gliding forward with an air of suppressed excitement.

"The carriage went down to the station, sir," he began, "and there was no one there. The coachman made inquiries, but nothing had been seen of the mistress since she left. So when I heard that, I talked it over with the housekeeper, and we both agreed that it was my plain duty to tell you the truth. At least, in my opinion, it's always a woman's place to break any bad news, but Mrs. Light seemed to think it best for me to undertake it, having lived so long in the family——"

"Speak out at once!" interrupted Mr. Rawnsley. "Say what has happened and go!"

The old man came a few steps nearer. His face was very pale, but he was evidently taking a certain grim pleasure in having such an unwonted opportunity of producing a sensation.

"Well then, sir," he began; "if you will have the truth, the mistress has gone to Paris!"

"To Paris!" echoed Mr. Rawnsley, blankly. "What could she want there? It's quite impossible that she would start on such a long journey by herself!"

"But you see, sir, there was the gentleman."

"What are you talking about, Stokes?" said Mr. Rawnsley, sternly. "You must be mad or drunk! There has been no gentleman here."

"Indeed, then, there has!" retorted the butler, casting aside all reserve in his haste to vindicate his character. "Any of the servants will tell you how a gentleman drove up to the door yesterday about an hour after your telegram came. The mistress seemed wonderfully pleased to see him—at least she ran out to the hall almost before he was inside the door, so that it was easy to see she expected him. And then they were very merry. Why, I could hear them laughing whilst I was cleaning the plate in the pantry! But when he came to go it was a different thing. She had her handkerchief up to her eyes as she went back to the drawing; I saw it myself."

Mr. Rawnsley was more than ever puzzled by this information.

"Who was the gentleman?" he inquired after a moment's thought.

"Well, indeed, sir, I can't tell; for the mistress met him in the hall before I had time to ask him name. But he was rather a foreign-looking gentleman, with a little black moustache, and I believe she called him Philip or——"

"You can stop!" thundered Mr. Rawnsley, suddenly. He recognized the portrait at once. Nothing could have annoyed him more than to hear of Philip Digby's presence in the neighborhood. He disliked him particularly, and always felt vaguely irritated at the excellent terms on which he stood with Isabel. It was simply wonderful how she could tolerate such a young man—the very antipodes of her husband.

"But why do you tell me all this rubbish?" he continued irritably. "I don't want to be disturbed at this time of night with long stories about strange gentlemen. It doesn't concern me in the least."

"It does indeed, sir! It goes to my heart to tell you, but the truth is sure to come out. She has gone off with him!"

The old man paused, expecting an outburst of rage at this announcement. Finding his master remained quite silent he continued with apologetic eagerness:

"I ought to have told you before, sir, but I was afraid, and that's the truth. First, I noticed how sad she seemed at his going, and then I made a pretence of finding the carriage rug when they were parting in the hall and I heard her promise to follow him to Paris as soon as she could get ready—that I'm ready to swear to. And then when she ordered the carriage and started off without her maid, and wouldn't leave any message with me—why then I went to the housekeeper and——"

"Stop!" interrupted Mr. Rawnsley, in a voice that caused the butler involuntarily to retire towards the door. "No more of these lies. You leave my house at once, and never let me see you again. Go!"

As he spoke he started up with such a menacing gesture that Stokes turned and fled without venturing another word.

When the door closed behind him, Mr. Rawnsley sank down in his chair. For some time he was too confused to be able to think clearly over what he had heard.

"How is this?" he exclaimed at last with a forced laugh. "I must be laboring under some delusion to attach any importance to the spiteful words of a jealous old servant, and yet, what can have become of Isabel? She must have left some message for me. It is too strange that she should have gone away without a word!"

He walked uneasily up and down the room several times, trying to hit on some satisfactory solution of the mystery. Presently he stopped in front of his wife's work-table and opened the drawer thinking it possible that he might come across that would give him a clue to her movements.

The first thing he took out was a French novel with Philip Digby's name scribbled on the cover. A piece of paper was stuck between the pages as a marker. He tore it hastily out; it was only an empty envelope with the Paris postmark.

With a smothered imprecation he dashed the book and paper on the floor and resumed his weary walk.

"Ah, it's all very well for the master to talk about lies," Stokes was at that moment saying to a sympathetic circle in the housekeeper's room, "but he wouldn't be half so angry if he thought they really were lies!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE BISHOP AND THE LUNATIC.—A good story is told of the late Bishop of D—— in connection with the county lunatic asylum in his diocese. The bishop had long been pressed to preach to the inmates of the asylum, and at last consented.

During his sermon he noticed that one of the male patients was paying very earnest attention to his discourse, and this caused the good bishop to address himself more particularly to his apparently appreciative listener. At last the sermon closed with an eloquent peroration, and the bishop looked to see the effect that it had on the lunatic.

To his horror, the man was still gazing fixedly at him, but now with his hands outstretched, in tandem fashion, from the tip of his nose, in the well-know but vulgar attitude of derision! The bishop speedily disappeared from the pulpit.

But the sequel of the story has to be told. The very next day his lordship was invited to a garden party in the neighborhood, where a noble avenue winds suddenly round an abrupt curve into full view of the lordly owner's mansion.

Driving down the avenue the bishop espied an aged clergyman walking towards the house, and hospitably took him into the open carriage. Being full of the asylum experience, he proceeded to tell the old vicar the story, and was just in the act of graphically depicting the lunatic's rude expression of scorn when the carriage swept round the curve, and the learned Bishop of D—— was seen by the elite of the county assembled on the lawn, with his fingers to his nose, as if in contempt of the vanity of a garden party!

EXPERTS IN HANDWRITING.

Giving evidence in court is only a comparatively small part of the business of a handwriting expert. His main occupation is advising private persons, especially those who have received anonymous communications.

Threatening letters to Irish landlords and others, slanderous post-cards, mysterious epistles signed 'A True Friend'—in fact, all the missives which cowardly, venomous; and illiterate people of a certain class are fond of inditing, bringing grist to the expert's mills.

The recipient generally has some suspicion as to the origin of these documents, and wishes to have his suspicion either confirmed or set at rest. Valentines, too, furnish a good deal of the work, even in these days when they are less popular than they were.

During the latter part of February there is a plentiful crop of inquiries respecting communications received on the 14th of that month. It may seem strange that any one should spend time and money in ascertaining the source of such banalities, but the undoubted fact that they do is only another illustration of thy power of curiosity and the feeling of injured dignity. Besides such applications as we have mentioned, there are many others.

Disappointed legatees are apt to have doubts as to the authenticity of a will which has ignored them; holders of dishonored bills desire to verify the signatures of acceptors or endorsers; and autograph hunters are ofter anxious as to the genuineness of some illegible scrawl reputed to be that of a man of some note. In various ways, therefore, the small class of experts—there are said to be only two in the whole of London—find a good deal of employment.

Regarding the methods made use of to determine authorship, specialist are naturally reticent. Some of them have admitted, however, the nature of leading principles which guide them. The philosophy of the matter rests mainly on the fact that it is very rare for any two persons to write hands similar enough to deceive a careful observer, unless one is imitating the other.

Fists, like faces, have all some idiosyncrasy, and the imitator has not merely to copy that of some one else, but to disguise his own. By careful and frequent practice he may succeed well enough to deceive the ordinary man, but is rarely successful in baffling the expert.

Even the most skilful culprit cannot wholly hide his individuality, as he is sure to relapse into his ordinary method occasionally. Then, again, great care has to be used, and this can be detected by the traces of hesitancy, the substitution of curves for angles, and vice versa, which come out very plainly when the writing is examined under the microscope, as it usually is by the expert.

A plan of detection which has been adopted with great success is to cut out each letter in a doubtful piece of writing, and paste all the As, Bs, &c., on separate sheets of paper. The process is also gone through with a genuine bit of caligraphy of the imitator or the imitated, as the case may be.

Comparison almost invariably shows that the letters are less uniform if imitation has been attempted, the writer being occasionally betrayed into some approach to his ordinary caligraphy, or into momentary forgetfulness of some special point in the handwriting he is simulating. No point is too small to escape an expert's attention.

The dotting of i's, the crossing of t's, the curls and flourishes, the intervals between the words, the thinness of the upper stroke and the thickness of the down-stroke, are all noted and carefully compared.

Where only a signature has been forged, and that by means of tracings from the original, the resemblance is often so exact as to deceive even the supposed author, but in these cases the microscope is generally effective in determining not merely the forgery but the method by which it was accomplished. It is some comfort to know that the cunning of the forger is overmatched by the scientific skill of the trained expert.

ONE of the few places in this country where the curfew bell is yet rung is Fayetteville, N. C. The village has been settled more than two centuries, and the practice has never lapsed. Indeed, so quiet and undisturbed by the outside world has this community remained that the curfew has there almost its original significance, and it is considered time for all good folk to be indoors when its summons is heard.

A SLIGHT EXPOSURE IN BAD WEATHER, when the system is out of order brings on a Stubborn Cold; the attending Cough irritates the Lungs, and if not promptly treated, frequently develops a tendency to a tuberculous condition. To avoid this danger, those troubled with Colds should resort at once to Dr. Jayne's Expectorant, which soon loosens and eradicates Coughs, soothes and heals inflamed parts, and removes all anxiety by setting the patient on the way to good health once more.

Scientific and Useful.

INCOMBUSTIBLE.—A process by which all kinds of wood can be rendered incombustible has been invented by a Chicago chemist.

FLASHLIGHT.—The use of aluminum in place of magnesium for the production of flashlight has been suggested and meets with some approval.

PHOTOGRAPHY.—An apparatus for taking photographs of distant objects, reproducing the minutest details with extreme clearness, has just been perfected in France.

BELTING.—By means of an ingeniously arranged apparatus the strength of old belting is now renewed or augmented to such a degree as greatly to lengthen its service.

FUEL.—A new kind of fuel, made from solidified petroleum and other materials, is now being extensively manufactured in France. It is stated that its heat producing properties are very great, and that experiments to use it in engine furnaces have been of a most satisfactory nature.

ALUMINUM.—An enthusiastic Boston sportsman, is tramping about the swamp lands in Florida with a novel addition to a hunter's outfit. He has made for use on the trip a pair of aluminum leggings, which, he claims, are light, convenient to wear and a comfortable safeguard from snakes.

ELECTRICITY.—The secretary of the Smithsonian Institution is arranging to have his carriage lighted by electricity. The current will be supplied by a storage battery of five two-volt cells, designed to slip under the coachman's box. There will be two side lights, of five-candle power each, and one inside, of two-candle power. The battery is expected to run about four hours without recharging.

Farm and Garden.

POULTRY.—It is the little things in poultry keeping that minister to the profit. One of these items is the care of the manure. You must go to the trouble of clearing it out frequently anyway; and so, while you are about it, why not take a little more trouble and put it where it will do the most good?

WAX.—The following paragraph may be of interest: "One of the best ways of extracting wax is to put it into a large muslin sack. Then put the whole into a boiler of water. As the wax melts, it will rise to the surface of the water, and then it can be skimmed off and put into another vessel to cool."

BUTTER.—An English method of testing butter to determine its purity, is to smear a clean piece of white paper with the suspected article, roll it up and set it on fire. If the butter is good the paper will emit a decidedly pleasant odor, but if there is any animal fat in the product the smell will be unmistakably tallowy.

THE PUBLIC TASTE.—The public taste is every year growing more exacting in its demand for good meats. A writer thinks this is good for the intelligent breeder and feeder, but for the chump who still believes that a sheep is a sheep, a hog is a hog, and a beef is a beef, and that anything is good enough, it means unprofitable labor and a life worn out before it learn any sense.

FRUIT TREES.—The planting of fruit trees, grape vines, small fruits, etc., should be a part of each season's regular work with the general farmer. Do not think that in a single year you can start all of these that you should have. Pursue the work regularly, and so get a variety, learn gradually the proper methods, and get them placed to better advantage than would be possible by lumping the work.

THE SOIL.—Take an acre of ground that is not liable to be "washed" by the rains, and haul out a lot of stable manure (not straw and litter), spread it over the land thickly, and then work the land well in the spring. Compare the crop next year with that from an acre, not manured, or only slightly so, and the difference in the crop will not only pay for the manure and labor, but also remonstrate that less land may be used.

Deafness Cannot be Cured

by local applications as they cannot reach the diseased portion of the ear. There is only one way to cure deafness, and that is by constitutional remedies. Deafness is caused by an inflamed condition of the mucous lining of the Eustachian Tube. When this tube is inflamed you have a rumbling sound or imperfect hearing, and when it is entirely closed, Deafness is the result, and unless the inflammation can be taken out and this tube restored to its normal condition, hearing will be destroyed forever; nine cases out of ten are caused by catarrh, which is nothing but an inflamed condition of the mucous surfaces.

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On Anger.

Mankind has a keen appreciation of the unusual; but what is common is passed by heedlessly, whether it be good or bad, until a knot of men organize themselves to praise or to denounce it. The slave is delirious when he feels himself a free man, the free man seldom gives a thought to his freedom; health and happiness need the foil of pain, disappointment, and bereavement; we have to be reminded to "love that well which we must lose ere long."

Few of us are aware how good for us are the brisk air and gracious light until we are told; we need by our side a Mentor who has eaten of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil to say, "this is a blessing!" or we overlook God's largest benefactions. It is the same with the curses. The commonest are the least talked of, or they are dismissed in the saying, "Well, it's human nature!"

Thus there are whole races who have yet to be taught that lying is an evil; there are classes of our own countrymen who have not realized that cheating is as bad as theft, and that a man cannot compound for robbing his fellow-man by calling the transaction with him a good bargain; there are myriads who think it jolly, generous, fine to be drunken in a respectable way—the thing is so common that they do not see its bearings. That survival from savagery, that tolerated madness called anger, is also one of these utterly bad ebullitions which we do not see aright because it is so common.

No man preaches against it, although, if we except pain, poverty, callousness, and perhaps licentious passion, it is in the sum-total of its effects the greatest enemy of human happiness. We have leagues against cruelty; when shall we see a league against anger, the most prolific parent of cruelty?

It may be said that there is a form of anger which is not only defensible but which is righteous and noble. A passionate revolt against falseness or inhumanity is the motor force that renovates the world of morals. But we should prefer to mark that noble feeling by another name than anger; and even this purifying passion of indignation—as we will term it—must be carefully restrained, for under its sanction many of the most cruel deeds that history records have been perpetrated. It is only when feeling is guided by sound judgment that indignation may be allowed free play.

We each of us have our plot of holy ground, the sacredness of which we jealously guard, and we are inclined to rave at all who do not take their shoes from off their feet when they approach it. In politics, in religion, anger keeps watch with a flaming sword lest any one should desecrate our own particular deities. But all this feeling is misplaced. It may be said at once that indignation is out of place among matters of opinion; its legitimate sphere in which it is, as a Puritan father said, one of the sinews of the soul is very circumscribed. The only righteous anger is the flush that follows the sight of some form or other of cruelty.

We can hardly call the stage of irritability and snappishness anger; but it generates an enormous crop of misunderstandings, grudges, and soreness. Nor can we regard with much seriousness the fireiness of temper that flashes out on slight provocation, and then as quickly subsides and leaves the victim sorry for his heat. That is foolish enough and useless. But there are multitudes of people—in many cases it affects whole families at a sweep—who are subject to paroxysms of passion, in which they are carried completely beyond the bounds of reason, and for the moment become madmen fit almost for any deed.

We punish the murderer who strikes down his fellow, but how seldom do we condemn the unbridled temper which finally culminates in sudden fiendishness! We have had analyses enough of the conflicting emotions that spring from unrequited love; we have had the ebullitions of torturing jealousy described and dissected; we have had revenge, stealthily creeping on to its end, pictured a thousand times; but of anger pure and simple there is, so far as we know, no literary study extant.

It does not lend itself to treatment in sequence; it is irresponsible, disconnected, causeless, a spontaneous creation, an isolated phenomenon. We never know when a passionate man will burst out into a fury; the most trivial rebuff will let loose the torrents of his wrath—nay, he will go off with less than the pull of a hair-trigger; he is like the bottles that burst through atmospheric changes without outside interference. It is the absolute uncertainty of anger which gives it its worst terror.

Fancy the children in a home like that, preparing some festivity, or inviting friends whom they respect and whom they would wish to see them and theirs at their best, turning over in their minds the fear that an outburst of fury from one or other of the passionate inmates of the home may mar the pleasure and bring pain, confusion, and disgrace! There is no more irksome neighbor than the anger-mastered man or woman.

Two or three disjointed thoughts before we finish. It must be remembered that, where parents are subject to passion, there is not only the hereditary tendency to the violent temper in the children, but they grow up to think that to be angry is a privilege of age. So we see whole families that are passionate. If it be asked who are the people who are subject to these tropical gusts of feeling, we fear the answer must include all kinds of men, though a laconic homely proverb, "A little pot is soon hot," points out the sort of people who are the chief offenders.

It is not easy to drive home to those who put themselves under the sway of passion the folly and unmanliness of their surrender; but one selfish argument may not be without effect, and that is that there is nothing which wears out the nerves and emasculates a man so quickly as fits of acute frenzy. To spite the world he wrecks and shatters his own spiritual and physical constitution.

Now suppose a habitually passionate man sees that the case we have described is his—has he any hope of cure? Undoubtedly he has, if he realizes the wickedness and absurdity of his irrational self-indulgence. In some cases anger wears out with age; the nerves become less sensitive, the physical capacity for excitement fails, the outbursts become less frequent and less violent, and one may meet here and there men of a mild and benevolent type who will own that they were very "sudden and quick in quarrel" in their youth.

Others, too, who were to the manner born, and who naturally adopted a violent expression of their whims and feelings, thinking that it was the way of the world, come into a broader place on their way through life, and, seeing that it is unusual and foolish, unseemly and altogether below the intelligence and dignity of man to bend their sails before every wandering gust of passion, school themselves into the repression of their wilder moods; so that, from one cause or another, there are probably as many men in the world who have mastered their tendency to anger as there are men who, being still uneducated in the art of self-control, give way to the deplorable frenzies which we have been describing.

It is a most disagreeable subject. Perhaps that is why it has been so seldom probed, and thus there are such multitudes left who are willing to see their reason temporarily dethroned and their manhood abrogated by displays of the savage selfishness of anger. One would think that the subject needs only to be fairly set forth to carry conviction to the worst slaves of passion. The man who is not master of himself can claim scant honor from extraneous conquests. There is a deep truth in the Eastern proverb, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

EVERYTHING in this world of ours has its limits, time, place, opportunity, human power, life itself, all come to an end. One of the great arts of living well and successfully is to understand these limits and to adapt ourselves to them. For the want of this many excellent schemes come to naught, many worthy people fail in their efforts, much strength and energy and talent are wasted. Every one realizes the importance of making a beginning, but few appreciate that there is an equal importance in making an end. How and when to do this is deserving of much more thought and care than is usually bestowed upon it.

HE who is open as the day, who has nothing which he cares to conceal, is pretty sure to have come by his possessions honorably. They stand for earnest honest labor of head or of hand, such as helps and never hurts mankind. They are the signs of his energy, his industry, his economy, his faithfulness, his ability. They reflect honor upon him; whereas gains secured without such equivalent and at the expense of others can only reflect disgrace.

Now and then one meets with an exceptional case in which energy seems to have been entirely omitted in the moral "make-up" of the individual; but human beings totally devoid of this element of worldly success are about as rare as brawnless living skeletons. Given a single spark of energy, it may be unquestionably increased and utilized by cultivation.

A LOVING heart carries with it, under every parallel of latitude, the warmth and light of the tropics. It plants its Eden in the wilderness and solitary place, and sows with flowers the gray desolation of rock and mosses.

WHAT proposition is there respecting human nature which is absolutely and universally true? We know of only one—and that is not only true but identical—that men always act from self interest.

IF we are ever in doubt what to do, it is a good rule to ask ourselves what we shall wish on the morrow that we had done.

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENTS.

P. P.—In mythology Parthenope was the siren after whom the city of Neapolis in Campania (Naples) was believed to have been originally named. The republic into which the French in 1799 transformed the Neapolitan kingdom was hence name the Parthenopean.

WESSEX.—Domesday-book is a book of the general survey of England, which was commenced in the reign of William I., 1080, and completed by five justices in 1086; it was intended to be a register whereby to determine the right in the tenure of estates, and from the question whether lands be ancient demesne or not is sometimes still decided; the book, fair and legible, is preserved in the Chapter-house, Westminster Abbey, and consists of two volumes—a greater and lesser, wherein all the counties of England, except Northumberland, Durham, Westmoreland, and Cumberland, are surveyed.

GAUL.—Captain Boycott was a very unpopular land agent in Ireland, and a number of persons at last persuaded the people in the captain's district to have no dealings with him. Men and women refused to work for him; shopkeepers would not supply him. He and his family did their best to garner the crops and to get through the work of the farms; but they had to be protected by police. Boycott struggled a long time, and he went in constant fear of death. At night, when the police patrols rode along the country roads, they heard voices calling from the darkness, "He'll never hear the birds sing in the spring." The terrible business went on until the captain was starved out and came to England; then the same treatment was applied to others; hence the new verb which puzzles you has passed into the language, and is now employed in all our dictionaries. Boycott's trouble began 1880, and he stood his ground as long as possible; but the forces against him at that day were too much for any one man.

T. S.—You must understand us as saying that the human race is entirely progressive. As the process of evolution goes on, there is always great degradation as well. Still you may take it for granted that the intellectual advance is not the only one made by man. The progenitors of our race can be now described with an accuracy which approaches perfection. Explorers know where to look for relics, and that is all the battle. Professor Huxley was able to claim credit for having described forty years ago the exact physique of primitive man. He had only the Neanderthal skull and a few odd bones; but the complete skeletons found in France quite fit in with the Professor's reasoned conjectures. The primitive man was a small creature with very crooked thigh-bones and dentition unpleasantly like the gorilla's. It is probable that the little creatures fought with their teeth at times. The gap between them and us is as great as that between us and the apes. Mark you, evolution does not explain all things, but it explains more phenomena than any other hypothesis. Cautious men know how much has yet to be done, and hence they never make large assertions.

FLUTE.—The different kinds of flutes do not bear any fixed relation to the various parts in music, but have special scores written for them in the orchestration of the great composers' best works. Handel's "Dead March" is a well-known specimen, two flutes moving in thirds against the reiterated base of the kettledrum. The ordinary flute is the most suitable for home music, as it most nearly coincides with the range of a soprano voice. The piccolo is too high and piercing for private use. It reaches a higher range than any other instrument. Its shrillness is useful sometimes in an orchestra, where the lower notes of the flute might be swamped; so it is generally used as an alternative instrument by a flute-player; but it has none of the sweet and soothing qualities of domestic music, and the thought of people singing in a little room to an ear-piercing piccolo accompaniment a couple of octaves higher than the voice makes one shudder. The ordinary flute is in every way better to learn. Its lower notes are very sweet and pleasing, and its great range and "agility" have caused it to be used largely by all the great composers, so that you can get abundance of practice. Beethoven and Mendelssohn always give the flute the leading part among the wind instruments.

GREEN.—An Irish association for the repeal of the Union was formed under the auspices of Daniel O'Connel in 1830; a proclamation of the Lord-Lieutenant prohibited the meetings of a society "leagued for the purpose of procuring a repeal of the Union, under the name of the Irish Society for Legal and Legislative Relief, or Anti-Union Society," in October 1830; the House of Commons, by a majority of 434, rejected O'Connell's motion for repeal on April 27, 1834; a new association in 1841, 1842 and 1843 became more violent; assemblies of the lower classes of the people were held in the last-named year in various parts of Ireland, some of them amounting to 150,000 persons, and called "monster meetings;" the great meeting at Trim took place on March 19, 1843; other meetings were held at Mullingar, Cork, Longford, Drogheda, Kilkenny, Mallow, Dundalk, Donnybrook, and other places; a meeting to be held at Clontarf on October 8, was prevented by the Government, and Daniel O'Connell and his chief associates were brought to trial for political conspiracy on January 15, 1844, and convicted on February 12; but the sentence was reversed by the House of Lords on September 4; the association for the repeal of the Union continued for some time under the direction of John O'Connell, but was little regarded; a vain attempt was made in Dublin to revive the Repeal agitation in December 1880.

A MAGIC STRAIN.

BY M. ROCK.

Far, far away from country lanes,
From hedgerows white with foam,
Where blackbirds poured their tender strains
And throstles found a home,
One of a careworn hurrying throng
That filled the narrow street,
I heard a prisoned skylark's song
Rise loud and clear and sweet.

'Mid clover-blooms of white and red
I heard the cornerake cry,
In many circles o'er my head
I saw the swallows fly.
Ah, while I heard the skylark sing
His glad triumphant strain,
The viewless glories of the Spring
Were mine that day again!

John Rexcroft's Niece.

BY G. Q

IF Smithers, a cab-driver, badge No. 52,-473, had not been promised an extra shilling by his fare to catch a train at London Bridge, and if, in consequence, he had not proceeded at undue speed up the approach to the terminus, he would not have been fined twenty shillings and had his license indorsed for knocking down an elderly gentleman who at that moment was carefully crossing the road. As it was, cupidity prevailed over caution, and the accident occurred.

The unlucky victim of the cabman's haste was speedily surrounded by an excited crowd and raised to his feet. He was covered with dust and had received a severe cut on his head, but was not insensible.

"Hope you are not much hurt, sir?" said the policeman on whose arm he rested,

"But I am!" replied the gentleman. "Can't you see that my arm is broken?"

"Then you had better let me take you to the hospital; it is close by."

"I shall do nothing of the sort. You can call a cab, and I will go home."

"Can I be of any assistance to you?" said a tall gentlemanly young fellow, as he pushed his way through the staring throng. "I am a doctor, and perhaps you may feel inclined to be guided by my counsel. Yes," he continued, after a rapid examination, "your arm is broken. I should certainly advise you to go to the nearest hospital and get it set at once. If you will allow me, I will conduct you there myself."

"And I tell you I hate hospitals, and I won't go!" returned the old gentleman irritably. "You say you are a medical man, do you not?"

"Certainly."

"What is your name?" "'Doctor Seymour,' at your servic."

"An F.R.C.S.?"

"Yes."

"And an M.D.?"

"Right again."

"Then you can see me home, if you like, and I'll give you the job of pulling me through this horrible pickle."

The crowd tittered; the policeman smiled grimly, and muttered to some one in the rear, "Rum old chap!"—while the young Doctor turned his head to conceal his amusement. Then, looking at his watch, he said—

"I shall be happy to be of use to you, if you do not live too far away; I have an hour or so to spare. May I ask where you reside?

"No. 8, Berringstone Square, when I am in town; and I think I am likely to stick there for some time, thanks to that fellow's stupidity!"

"Oh, then, I live within a quarter of an hours's walk of you!" replied Doctor Seymour. "Come—get into the cab, sir! If you will not allow me to take you to the hospital, we must lose no time in getting you home."

With womanly care, the Doctor helped the injured man to get into the vehicle, wiped the stained face as well as he could with a handkerchief previously damped at a neighboring water-plug, and then bound it tightly round the wounded head.

"Confound it!" said the old man, as they drove towards their destination.

"I beg your pardon?"

"I say 'Confound it,' sir!"

"Oh—ah—precisely?"

"Lucy will be frightened out of her wits when she sees me arrive in this plight."

"Pray do not let that trouble you. I shall know how to apprise your family of the accident with alarming them.

"I have no family; there is only my niece Lucy. By-the-bye, I have not told you my name—'John Rexcroft.'"

The Doctor made a note of it.

"Booking a patient, I see!" remarked Mr. Rexcroft, with a slight sneer, in spite of the agony he was evidently suffering.

Doctor Seymour looked up somewhat sternly; but, seeing the pain-stricken face, he withheld the sharp retort he was about to make, and chimed in with the old man's humor.

"Every Jack to his trade," he said pleasantly, tapping his book. "This is the black list. Let us hope you will not be long upon it."

Berringstone Square was reached in about half an hour. The servant said that Miss Lucy had gone out for a short time, not expecting her uncle back before five or six o'clock. So it happened that, before she returned, Mr. Rexcraft was tucked up in bed as comfortably as possible, with his head bandaged and his arm in splints.

"How long shall I have to remain here?" growled the patient.

"Perhaps a fortnight," replied the Doctor; "it depends."

"Be sure and come every day and get me out of bed as soon as possible. I shall not mind when I am walking about."

"If you keep quiet, we may have you down stairs very quickly. I will now leave you and wait your niece. Au revoir!"

In a gentle self-possessed manner Doctor Seymour explained the accident to Lucy—"Miss Halse," he learned her name was. He found the young lady to be a kind and sensible girl. Her dark blue eyes filled with tears at first; but, when the Doctor mentioned the need her uncle would have of careful nursing, she quickly subdued her emotion and listened earnestly to the few simple instructions he gave her.

"I will send the medicine in less than an hour," Doctor Seymour said when leaving. "Let it be given regularly, as it will keep down fever. Remember that, with ordinary care, your uncle is in no danger. His constitution is extremely robust. I shall call to-morrow morning, so good-bye for the present!"

Frank Seymour was seven-and-twenty years of age when he passed the "Physicians" and was able to tack "M.D." to his name. That was about four months previous to Mr. Rexcraft's accident. He was not, and never had been in practice on his own account, but for five years he had been assistant to Doctor Berry, who thoroughly appreciated the young man's indefatigable industry and unquestionable ability.

Doctor Berry had been a true friend to Seymour. He had forwarded him in his studies, "coached" him for his "exams.," and thus enabled him to become fully qualified as a medicial practitioner at an age when most struggling assistants are content with diploma of the College of Surgeons, beyond which a great number are never able to aspire; for Frank was, after all, nothing but a struggling assistant. Without money or family interest of his own, it was only to sheer hard work and long-suffering patience that he could ever look for a substantial position.

To that prospect in itself he did not object. But he had been very imprudent. He had fallen in love and become engaged. But, then, he argued, it took two to fall into an error of that description, and Margaret Brinsmead evidently ought not to have been such an irresistibly amiable sweet-natured girl.

He did love the girl with all the strength of his ardent temperament, and, being assured of her true affection in return, the two young hearts had agreed to journey through "the wilderness of this world," in company.

Frank knew very well that the brightest hope of his existence was to make Margaret his own darling wife.

But it was weary waiting, and sometimes, when he looked forward and saw how long a time might elapse before he could hope to save sufficient money to make a start even in an humble way, he would grow impatient, and exclaim, "I have a great mind not to wait any longer, but marry her at once and risk it!"

Then prudence would come to the rescue and counsel more patience and more philosophy. So the youthful pair waited on, and Frank worked and saved and worried himself more than ever.

Within three weeks of his accident John Rexcroft had sufficiently recovered to leave his room. A strange figure he looked, pottering about the house in a dressing-gown, his arm tied up in a "cradle," and his head still adorned with a pale of diachylon plaster. But he was getting well rapidly. The system had received no shock—a thing most to be feared in old people. Frank soon discovered that his patient had been inured to hard cracks and dangerous situations in years gone by.

"This, sir, would have been a flea-bite to me in my young days," the old man said to the Doctor. "I have been half starved, half drowned, half scalped by Indians, half frozen, half burned, and I was going to say half devoured by cannibals; but that wouldn't be true. They had a good try to get a steak off me, however, and it was not owing to my toughness that I escaped, I can tell you, for the brutes had teeth like wolves, and leather would have been like mutton-chops to them. I'll give you the whole story one of these days."

It soon became evident to Frank that the eccentric old gentleman had taken a fancy to him. With all his brusqueness of manner, Mr. Rexcroft was hospitable and good-natured, and he possessed a great knowledge of the world and a fund of anecdote that did not fail to attract the young Doctor.

The intimacy between them gradually assumed the character of friendship. And, after all, a friend like John Rexcroft was not to be despised. A wealthy retired shipowner, he appeared to have no relatives, or at least none that he cared about, beyond his niece Lucy, who was an orphan, and upon whom he looked as an adopted daughter.

Frank became a frequent visitor at Berringstone Square. Old Rexcroft looked forward eagerly to his visits, because he could then play a good game at chess with an antagonist worthy of his skill, or plunge into stories of past adventure, or dilate on the manners and customs of strange countries he had visited, or discuss politics, literature, morals, metaphysics. Nothing came amiss; he had something to say upon every topic, and that something was always worth listening to. His intellect was clear and penetrating, and his wit was trenchant.

Lucy also looked forward to Frank's appearance, because—well, she did not know exactly why. Had she been pressed hard upon this subject, she might have grown rather red and angry, and replied, "Because she did!"

But she would never have acknowledged that her heart beat faster when she heard Doctor Seymour's footstep, or that her ears were always open for the sound of his deep pleasant voice, or that her little hand almost trembled when she placed it in his to say merely "How d'ye do?" or "Good-bye."

John Rexcroft was a close observer of human nature and a keen physiognomist. He saw in which direction Lucy's affections were a tending long before she became conscious of it herself; and, although he was equally sure that Frank had never regarded her otherwise than with the eye of friendship, it occurred to him that the best thing for all three would be for the young couple to "make a match of it."

And, when John Rexcroft made up his mind to a thing, he stuck to it. His tenacity had enabled him to amass a large fortune. He had always carried out his schemes, his plans, his ventures to the end, whether he gained or lost by them, and he meant to do the same now with regard to Frank and Lucy.

He drew a glowing picture of a cheerful fireside, with laughing prattling children whom he would dandle on his knee, and thought how happy the declining years of his life would be in the sunshine of that loving home.

He would no longer feel that he was an old bachelor—the bitterness of loneliness would give way to the joys of the family circle even in his old age. Yes—that was it! And Frank was just the man—noble, kind, intelligent but poor. What a blessing! He would become his benefactor, and bind him by ties of gratitude. John Rexcroft rubbed his hands at the delightful prospect.

"We will set about it at once," he said.

One evening Mr. Rexcroft and Frank Seymour found themselves alone in the comfortable drawing-room at Berringstone Square. Lucy had gone on a visit to Brighton for a few days, so her uncle thought the moment propitious to "take soundings," as he said, and see how the Doctor was likely to receive his project. He did not doubt that his scheme would be successful, as the advantage appeared to be all on the side of Frank.

"Checkmate in three moves!" said Mr. Rexcroft triumphantly, as he placed his piece in the necessary position.

"It is inevitable," returned Frank. "I must resign myself to my fate. It was a splendid game, and so well won that I feel almost honored in the defeat!"

"Chess, like life, is a game that must be well played if the result is to bring any satisfaction, whether it be victory or the reverse. In chess a real opportunity that is once neglected is well-nigh irretrievable. In life also, if we fail to avail ourselves of our chances, or if we make a false move at a critical moment, our luck seldom returns."

"There is this difference however between the game of chess and the game of life—in the first we ourselves are the fate that directs the pieces, in the second we are merely the pieces directed by a greater power than our own."

"It do not take that view at all. A man, for instance, is the architect of his own fortunes by reason of his strength and ability."

"Ay. But whence came come that strength and that ability? They are qualities that are natural to some men—born in them—inherited, if you will, like their physical powers. Others, again, lack the necessary energy, far-sightedness, finesse, or whatever may be the mental forces requisite to bring them through great difficulties to the goal of their desires. Genius of all kinds is the gift of Heaven, quite as muchin degree as it is in kind."

"Your theories sound very well; but, looking at life, we have before us a fact, apart from any theories we may entertain as to its deeper mysteries. The external aspect of that fact, at all events, is that, when a man tries, he succeeds in part, if not in the whole—that, when a man calculates his chances, he arrives nearer the mark than when he does not calculate at all. Take yourself, for example."

"Myself?"

"Yes—you, Frank Seymour, M.D. A young man with sufficient talent to rise high in your profession, to attain to honor, power, wealth, to live and do good, while at the same time receiving the splendid and just reward of a successful career—are you content to remain the assistant of a gentleman who I am sure is not your superior in actual ability, though he may be in experience?"

"Content? Not I! It is my heart's desire to be in practice for myself."

"Practice? What sort of practice? Buried in some remote suburban district, to minister to the aches and pains of clerks' wives and tradesmen's children?"

"That sounds rather uncharitable, Mr. Rexcroft. In such a place as you mention I could do my duty as thoroughly as elsewhere, though I must confess that I, like most other people, possess some ambition. But at present a very unpretentious beginning would be more welcome to me than I can express."

"And why should the beginning be so very small, Mr. Humility? Have you no idea, no notion, no glimmering of the proper way to set about laying the foundation-stone of your own fortune?"

"Not the most remote. My prospects are the reverse of brilliant. I must be content with little, and, Micawber-like, wait for big things to turn up."

"Wait for a fiddlestick! Use the means that good luck has placed at your immediate disposal."

"I should like to know what they are."

"Frank Seymour, stand up and look in that glass!"

"Well?"

"Are you not young? Are you not tall? Is not your frame strong and manly? Have you not a bright handsome face? Are you not in mind and body a gentleman?"

"And what of it?"

"What of it, sir? Everything of it! Has nature favored you thus for nothing? Your duty is to marry, your interest is to marry, your inclination should be to marry. Take my advice therefore, and marry; but let your choice be an amiable girl, a pretty girl, and a girl with money."

Frank's face flushed scarlet. In his mind's eye he beheld the image of Margaret as he had seen her last, her only ornaments being the gold brooch and earrings he had given her, and the snow-white camellia he had brought and placed in her dark brown hair. In reply to Mr. Rexcroft he could only ejaculate—

"A girl with money?"

"Even so," returned the old man. "Money is a defence against the troubles of life; there is nothing wrong in providing oneself with that defence and a good wife at the same time if no violence be done to the affections. On the contrary, great wisdom is shown by the man who can unite the two desiderata—love and money. Now look here, Frank—you are an excellent doctor and a clever man, but in the ways of the world you want a little help. Fill up your glass, my boy! I will give you one or two of my ideas that may be of service to you. If I tried, I think

I could find the very girl to suit you. She is sweet-tempered, good-looking, a lady, and possessed of sufficient means to give you as fair a lift on the road to success as your ambition could desire. I believe firmly that, if you laid siege to her heart, you would conquer. To cut a long story short, she has large dark-blue eyes, golden hair, and her name is 'Lucy.'"

"Your niece?"

"Just so!" said Mr. Rexcroft, nodding his head, while his eyes sparkled with suppressed merriment. "A nicer, a better, a more lovable girl, putting all monetary considerations out of the question, is not to be found in a long day's march, I can tell you! When she returns, you shall have every liberty to find that out for yourself, if you have not already done so. She deserves a good husband, such as you could not help being if you tried. Candidly, it is as much in her interest as in yours that I have broached this subject. What say you?"

Frank rose with easy dignity, and, although his voice was somewhat tremulous, there was no hesitation in his reply.

"Mr. Rexcroft, you have done me a great honor; I appreciate it and thank you; but I am glad to say I cannot avail myself of your goodwill in this respect, highly as I esteem and admire Miss Haise."

"Glad, sir? What do you mean?"

"Glad, because I am already engaged—my hand and my dearest affections—to a young lady whom I love and whose place in my heart no one else could ever fill; nor could any one ever supplant me in hers."

"'Engaged' be hanged! 'Love,' 'heart,' and 'affections'—bosh!"—and Mr. Rexcroft took up the poker and thrust it fiercely between the bars; but, as it was summer, he only succeeded in making chaos of the tastefully-arranged fireplace ornaments. "Well, you don't get a fortune with her, I suppose?" he added savagely.

"Oh, yes, I do," returned Frank quietly; "she is one in herself!"

"Nonsense! Look here, Seymour—you know what I mean—any money?"

"Well, yes, I dare say she will contrive to have a pound or two in her pocket on her wedding-day—just for the look of the thing, you see."

"Frank, you're a donkey! For you to marry a penniless girl is an absurdity; you will tug at the oar of incessant labor all your life for mere bread and cheese."

"I will take my chance."

"And, 'When poverty comes in at the door——' You know the saying!"

"'Better is a dinner of herbs and contentment therewith——' You are acquainted with the proverb."

"Pray may I ask for the favored lady's name?"

"Certainly—'Miss Margaret Brinsmead.'"

"Margaret Brinsmead? Margaret Brinsmead, did you say?"

"I did. Do you know her?"

"Know her—know her? Not I; nor do I want to do so. I knew some folks of that name a long time ago; that is why it struck me. Seymour, you had better embrace my proposal."

"How can I? I am going to embrace Margaret to-morrow evening! come, Mr. Rexcroft—seriously, I am engaged. No doubt you feel it a pity in the circumstances. From the point of view of simple worldly advantage you may be right. As I look at it however, I am one of the most fortunate, certainly one of the happiest of men!"

John Rexcroft sat silently ruminating for a few minutes, and, when he looked up, there was a curious expression on his face, as of a man suddenly possessed by a new idea. He gazed steadfastly at Frank for a few seconds, and then said—

"Let me own frankly that I have set my heart very much on the possibility of a union between you and Lucy—first, because I myself like you almost as a son; and, secondly, because I soon saw that Lucy would grow very fond of you, if she has not begun to do so already. You are engaged. It is unfortunate both for my plans and for your social welfare—very unfortunate—but still not an insurmountable difficulty. You would not be the only man in the world who being so situated, had seen the necessity of reversing matters altogether—not the only man who, when good luck actually knocked at his door, had wisely ceased to regard the shadow in order to grasp the substance. Frank Seymour, I understand your interest better than you do; my advice is sound, shrewd, carefully weighed. This is what I have to say—judge for yourself. If you are content to unite yourself with my niece, I will purchase for you a first-class practice worth two thousand a year, and it shall be one that will enable you to rise to the top of your profession. That is a plum that does not fall at the door of every young doctor—does it?"

Frank stood six feet in his boots; but, as he waited, slowly buttoning up his coat while Mr. Rexcroft spoke, he gradually drew himself up until he seemed to assume the proportions of a giant. His expression was one of contempt.

"Mr. Rexcroft," he said, "I have been mistaken in you; I took you for a man of honor. What you have just proposed is a disgrace to your gray hairs. I am sorry that it was even possible for you to misinterpret my character to such an extent. Sir, I wish you a very good day!"

"Stop a minute! Do you think I am to be put down by these high tragedy attitudes? Not a bit! I tell you I'm a schemer, a plotter, a regular old hand; I never did and I never shall leave any stone unturned to get my own way! Take care that you don't get caught—that you don't marry my niece in the end! I say you shall marry my niece—there! I, John Rexcroft, tell you so! You will marry her, I say; you will have a practice worth two thousand a year! Oh, I can read your fortune better than an Egyptian soothsayer! What do you say to that, my young friend?"

"All I can say is," replied Frank, with astonishment at the old man's vehemence, "that, if I did not know you as well as I do, I should call you a fool! You had better take a composing-draught, my good sir!" added Frank impatiently, as he turned and left the room.

"I say, Frank Seymour," shouted John Rexcroft over the balusters, "you'll make up your mind to do as I say in four-and-twenty hours! You can't get over me; I'm too many for you!"

Frank reached the street door and made his exit; but the old man was leaning over the balcony as he went out of the house.

"Hallo, Frank," he cried again—"don't forget—I give you four-and-twenty hours to settle the matter, and a month to get married in! There's a good boy—go along and do as I tell you! What a bit of fun," said Mr. Rexcroft, and he returned to the drawing-room, rubbing his hands—"what a rare bit of fun! What a glorious old fool I can be when I like! I am sorry for Lucy, though. Never mind; I do not think the cupid's dart has penetrated very deeply as yet. Well, I never! If I did not thoroughly enjoy young Seymour's righteous indignation! As the schoolboys say. It's a regular lark! Ha, ha!"

"By all that is wonderful," muttered Frank, as he sped homewards, "I feel as much knocked over as if I had seen a ghost! The old humbug, the dishonorable old rascal! One would almost think that trade demoralized a man. At all events, I think speculation does—and he has been a speculator all his life. I cannot make it out! Does he intend to try to do me any harm with Margaret? Ah, if so, let him beware! But I will soon put an end to that doubt; it wanted only this to decide matters. He was quite right—it is my duty, my interest, and my inclination to get married; and so I will too, though I should be able to start practice only in a seven-roomed house! Prudence, get thee to a nunnery? I will wed Margaret as soon as possible, trusting to luck and our mutual love. And John Rexcroft shall be one of the first to receive intimation of our marriage, together with a small—a very small—piece of the wedding-cake."

* * * * * *

Margaret Brinsmead went into the garden to pluck a rose. Frank was coming that evening, and, as she placed the flower in her dress, she gave a happy little laugh as she thought how it would certainly be transferred to his coat before he left.

"If he keeps all flowers he begs and steals from me," she said, "he must have a whole boxful by this time!"

Mrs. Brinsmead had been for many years a widow; but, left with a regular though very small income, she had, by dint of economy and perseverance been able to devote herself to the education and welfare of her children. She now reaped the reward of her endeavors.

Oscar and Edgar, the two boys, were doing fairly well in the world for young men of twenty-two and eighteen years respectively. They vied with each other in making their mother's life as free from trouble and anxiety as possible.

Margaret, who had just completed her twentieth birthday, turned to good account her knowledge of music, in which she had been excellently instructed, and added her quota to the general total that enabled the family to keep united.

When Frank Seymour called to see Margaret, which he did pretty frequently, he invariably crossed the fields and made his appearance at the back-gate, and, by peculiar good fortune, he generally found Margaret engaged in some trifling gardening operations at the precise moment that he arrived. It happened as usual on this particular evening—the evening after Frank had so indignantly rejected Mr. Rexcroft's proposal.

"Ever faithful, ever true!" said Margaret archly, as the young man approached and greeted her with a lover's tenderness. "But how many times have I told you, sir, to come in at the front door, like a respectable member of the community, and not by the back wall, like a thief and a robber?"

"My dear girl, how many times have I explained to you—in my professional capacity, mind!—that wandering by yourself in a garden between six and seven o'clock in the evening is a symptom of a malady which demands the greatest care and watchfulness on the part of the adviser to whose care you have committed your health and well-being? Society, my love, in these limited and solitary rambles is what your case absolutely demands. Hence I am here. There is another reason, too, which to-day at least makes me more than ever desirous of speaking with you alone."

"Frank, you are serious—I can see that. I hope it is nothing very dreadful you have to tell me?"

"On the contrary, I hope it will bring us together as man and wife sooner than we expected. That is not very dreadful," he added, with a fond smile.

"Frank, what is it?"

"Well, I have received what might be called next door to an offer of marriage."

"You? You are joking with me, Frank!"

"Not at all; I assure you it is a fact! A very nice girl of about your own age is the heroine, too."

"'A nice girl' you call her? A shameless brazen woman would, I think, be the better description!"—and Margaret's cheeks flushed hotly.

"Now do not be hard upon Lucy; she really is a charming little girl. And I am sure of one thing—you and she would agree wonderfully and strike up a lively friendship."

"Agree! Friendship! Frank, how can you——"

"I must tell you that the proposal did not emanate from her, but from her uncle. Most certainly she knew nothing whatever about it."

"I breathe again. I began to blush for my sex."

"Yes—I observe that your cheeks are even still of the hue of the 'red red rose that's newly sprung in June';" and Frank laughingly kissed his sweetheart's half-smiling, half-tearful face.

"Please do not take such keen note of my little failings, but tell me all about this romantic affair concerning 'uncle' and 'Lucy,' or whatever her name is!"

"But do you wish to hear?" said Frank tantalizingly.

"The idea! Of course I do! It is a shame to tease!"

"Well, then, in few words, you must know that a wealthy old gentleman friend and patient of mine—who, to do him justice, really did seem to conceive a wonderfully strong partiality for your humble servant—had the impertinence to offer to purchase me a practice worth two thousand a year on condition that I should woo and wed his only niece, who is to him as a daughter—the Miss Lucy aforesaid. The extraordinary part of it is that, when the old fellow found I was engaged, and to a darling who is worth all the practices and all the Lucys that ever existed since the time of Adam, he positively tried to persuade me to break my heart and ruin my honor by slighting my plighted word to you! Did any one ever hear the like? But the funny part is to come. As soon as he found that my answer was very little more than a preparation to quit his distasteful presence, he flew into a passion, and began to bully like a maniac, declaring that I should marry his niece within a month. I never had such a surprise in all my life. I fancy the old man has gone queer in his head. There—that, in brief, is the story. But now there is something awful to follow."

"Then there is an awful part, after all?"

"Yes," continued Frank, with a comical attempt to speak in a sad tone. "My antiquated friend gave me to understand, in the early portion of his remarks, that it was my duty to marry without delay a rich wife; and, in the latter part, he entirely convinced me."

"Oh, Frank!"

"So I have come here this evening," pursued Frank, his tones sinking to the melodious whisper of love, "to utter my fondest wish that you will consent very soon to be that wife—to ask you to give me for ever the riches of your affection, to bless me with the treasure of your noble nature, to endow me with the jewel of your changeless sympathy in all misfortune or prosperity that fate may have in store for us. You and you alone can be my rich wife, for to me you are indeed far above any other riches. Margaret, we will wait no longer. Why should we? I shall make arrangements in a few days to commence in a quiet fashion to practise on my own account. I shall have but a modest simple home to offer you. Share it with me, Margaret, and then the days of good fortune and success, if ever they come, will seem the sweeter to both of us!"

Margaret murmured a loving response to this appeal, and in those two hearts that summer evening there was unspeakable content.

A few weeks later a merry party was assembled at the little villa where the Brinsmeads resided. The occasion was the marriage of Margaret with Frank Seymour.

The wedding-breakfast was being partaken of by joyful and perhaps hungry guests. It was a good old-fashioned wedding, refined, certainly, but most decidedly jolly.

Margaret did not shed a single tear, but cut the cake gaily. Frank did not appear in the least embarrassed; he replied brightly to all the congratulations and good wishes there were poured upon him from every side.

Everybody was delighted, and nobody wished the bride and bridegroom away in order that the company might enjoy themselves without the restraint of their presence.

"I wonder what old Rexcroft will say to this?" said Frank to his friend and "best man."

At that moment the servant brought in a card. Mrs. Brinsmead glanced at it and turned rather pale.

"John Rexcroft! It must be my brother. I have not heard of him for fifteen years."

"Yes, sister, it is your brother," said John Rexcroft, who entered the room almost on the heels of the servant; "and, if you have not heard of me from fifteen years, here I am now! Very rude of me, though, an old fogy, to come and disturb you on such an interesting occasion!"

"John!" exclaimed Mrs. Brinsmead, rising and trembling with surprise and excitement.

"Come, Margaret," said Mr. Rexcroft, embracing his sister—"let by-gones be by-gones if only because they have gone by such a long while ago! I will charge myself with your welfare in future and also that of your boys; believe me, I am well able to do it. There—give me a kiss, and dry your eyes! We shall be friends again even now, shall we not?"

"Oh, they are tears of joy, my dear John—indeed they are!"

"Well, I can't cry," said Mrs. Rexcroft, in a voice that sounded very much as though he could, "but I'm troubled with a huskiness in my throat which comes on at times and is rather dangerous; so don't excite me, my dear.

"My doctor says that excitement is very bad for my health, and prescribes composing-draughts. Ah, there he is, the young scoundrel!"—shaking his fist at Frank.

"So this is the way you treat your friends and patients, is it? They might die in their beds, without pill or potion, for what you care! But I've got the best of you!

"Yes, you honorable young dog, you faithful-hearted rascal, you incorruptible knave, didn't I tell you that you would and should marry my niece? Well, you have done it.

"My only niece. Didn't I tell you that I would help you to a practice of Heaven knows how much a year? Well, I will. There—confess yourself done brown—brown as a berry! And now give me your fist, my boy, and pour me out a glass of wine that I may drink long life and prosperity to you and your charming wife! Then will I make public confession for the good of my soul and the satisfaction of everybody's curiosity."

Explanations followed. John Rexcroft, who was many years older than his sister, had conceived a strong dislike to the man upon whom her love was bestowed. He carried his opposition to the match so far that he declared he would break off all ties with his sister if it were carried out.

The marriage took place, and John Rexcroft was as good as his word. For seven

years he took no notice of either his sister or her husband.

At the end of that time, when the little Margaret was about three years old, he began to show signs of "coming round," and a reconciliation actually took place; but it was destined to be of brief duration. John Rexcroft took a great liking to his little niece, bought lots of toys and sweets, and took her out for drives in his carriage, while his nephews he comparatively neglected. One day he proposed in his blunt way to adopt the child and bring her up as his own.

"I shall never marry," he said to his sister, "so you may as well let me have her. It will be all the better for you, and all the better for her in the future. I am rich and you are poor, and, what is worse, you are likely to remain poor unless I come forward and help you. Don't let us have any difficulties about it. Accede to my request, and let me stand your friend and hers."

But Margaret was the only daughter, and dearly beloved she was too. Her parents made up their minds to brave the enmity of John Rexcroft rather than part with her. When the bachelor-brother saw that there was no hope of securing his little prize, he put on his hat and walked out of the house without saying "Good-bye."

Some time afterwards Mrs. Brinsmead became a widow. The money her husband had been able to leave was very little indeed. In her grief and anxiety for her children she wrote to her brother, offering to let him have Margaret to bring up as his own. His reply was short and cold.

"I have already adopted as my niece a little orphan girl, which will occupy in my heart and home the advantages I had destined for your child Margaret. When I made you my offer, it was scorned. I have not now either the will or the intention to entertain yours."

So Mrs. Brinsmead never troubled her brother again; nor did he in any way interest himself in her until the memorable morning of Frank's marriage.

John Rexcroft made amends, so far as was possible, for his animosity. His promise to Frank he fulfilled to the letter, and Frank is at present one of the most successful and highly esteemed physicians in the metropolis. John Rexcroft lives with his sister now, but he often pays long visits to Frank and Margaret, to whose little ones the old man is greatly attached.

As for Lucy, she soon got over her heart-ache; for, as her uncle had surmised, love had not yet claimed her for his own. She succumbed however about eighteen months later to the tender influence of "that meddlesome boy who will leave nobody alone if he can help it."

THE DOMADOR.

Probably there is no calling followed by man in which the element of danger to life and limb is more closely associated than in that of the Domador or horse-tamer of the South American Pampas; and certainly there is none in which daring courage, resolute will, and cool nerve are more necessary.

There is little in common between the craft of the ordinary horsebreaker and that of the domador. The former may expatiate on the trouble and danger attending the breaking-in of a "wild young colt;" but after all, the colt springs from a line of more or less domesticated sires, and—according to modern theories—should be a more ductile and breakable animal than the wild descendant of a long line of untamed progenitors bred on the trackless plains of the South American continent.

The fearless daring of the swart domador—half Indian, half Spaniard,—can only be thoroughly appreciated by those who have been eye-witnesses of the feats he performs in catching, mounting, riding, and taming a young horse of the Pampas. The means employed in trapping and selecting a particular animal are various. Sometimes the "lasso" or the "bolas" is used; but more frequently a whole "tropilla" is driven upon from a distant "potero" or grazing-ground, to an extensive corral, with an entrance wide enough to admit the passage of only two or three animals at a time.

Above this entrance, which is necessarily of great strength, a stout crossbeam is fixed at the height of from six to eight feet above the ground. On this the domador squats himself and waits, cool and prepared, while the herd of wild horses is driven up and urged into the enclosure.

This alone requires nerve; for the impetuosity and impact of a tropilla of from fifty to a hundred animals struggling in a mass together would seem sufficient of themselves to overturn the supports of the gates and trample them and the domador under foot. But a wholesome fear of the strange object crouched up above acts as a curb to regulate those struggling to pass the barriers.

Amidst this mass the quick eye of the domador soon singles out a horse suitable to his requirements, perhaps the finest and most vigorous of the whole tropilla. As the animal passes beneath the crossbeam—swift as a dart, unerring as the lasso—the domador drops upon his back and rides on with him into the spacious corral. The terrified brute plunges and rears and rushes madly here and there, rousing the whole herd into a state of excitement and fear.

Once free of the danger of collision with the herd, which has fled to the farthest corner of the corral, the domador whips from his arm a large and coarse cloth, with which he promptly succeeds in blindfolding the captured horse, and then begins in a variety of ways to master the proud wild spirit beneath him.

The horse will kick out in all directions, plunge and rear, whirl round and round, backwards and forwards, and even roll over and over; but as well might he attempt to shake off his own mane as to rid himself of that terrible incubus, the domador.

The latter, of course, takes care that the animal does not roll over him. He simply steps off and stands aside till the brute picks himself up again, only to find that the grip on his sides is there strong as ever.

Blindfolded as he is, he cannot see his tormentor, although at times he manages to elude the latter's grasp and attempt flight; but the ready lasso speedily arrests his mad course. As a rule, before the horse has had time to regain his feet the domador has contrived to slip into his mouth the cruel massive bit used all over the Platine countries.

The effects of this new instrument of torture are fearful. Maddened by the pain, quivering with rage and fear, the animal dashes away in any direction, forced by the cruel bit now to this side and now to that, until the domador at length succeeds in forcing him through the gates of the corral out on to the wide open campo.

Then begins a mad race for liberty or the mastery of a noble spirit. At a speed to which terror, pain, and fury lend wings, horse and man thunder over the ground, which seems literally to fly beneath their feet. Foam drops like flying scud on each side of the horse; his nostrils dilated and his eyeballs distended; mane and tail streaming on the wind which their speed creates; the tamer seated cool and grim, hand and eye alert, and every faculty bent upon overpowering the fierce beast he bestrides.

Thus they pursue their wild flight for many leagues; and the domador knows that when the brute's mad rage is spent and his strength exhausted, he will slacken his headlong pace more and more, until he almost completely halts; and soon, breaking out into a fit of trembling, surrender for ever the savage freedom of his untamed state. The rest of his education is easy, and need not be told.

Amongst the many accidents to which the domador is peculiarly liable, none is of such frequent occurrence as a crushed leg or a broken knee-cap. Sometimes a horse in rushing from the corral will skim dangerously near to one of the gate-posts; and unless the domador be very active and smart, he is likely to be hurtled with all the brute's force against some projection. I once saw a domador caught in this way. His knee-cap was broken, yet he pluckily refused to give in until he had tamed the fierce animal he bestrode. But he was laid up for six months afterwards.

Occasionally it happens, too, that a horse of unusual mettle and fierceness will get hold of the bit, and then let the domador look out for his life! His means of controlling the animal are gone. All he can do is to keep his seat till the horse has run himself out. Provided the ground before them is clear, there is not much danger to be apprehended: but if, as oftimes is the case, there is much broken ground, intercepted by burrows and holes of all kinds, the domador needs all his cunning and skill to avert the constantly recurring dangers. As a case in point, there occurs to my recollection the tragic end of a domador called Santiago, who, though an Irishman by extraction, had lived nearly all his life in the southern camps of Buenos Ayres, and had attained a wide renown as a skilful and courageous tamer. Though given occasionally to intemperate habits, Santiago could generally be relied on, and had successfully broken scores of horses without any more serious mishap than an occasional broken limb. One day, however, a few days ago, he mounted a horse "wid the divil in 'im," and this tameless brute managed to get the bit between his teeth and bolt with poor Santiago. No power on earth could control or turn him one way or another; he simply tore straight on at an infuriated speed which baffles description. It is rare indeed that a domador in such a situation loses his head. If the worse comes to the worst, he prefers to throw himself off the horse's back and risk breaking his neck that way rather than be thrown. But I fancy that Santiago must have been celebrating some fiesta that day with copious libations to the bacchanalian deities, and so become reckless. Not otherwise can I account for his obliviousness to the frightful dangers that menaced him on all sides. The district through which he was being literally hurled is a wild and barren region of sandhills and ridges, which extends along the South Atlantic coast from Mar del Plata to Necochea. Just at a point between these two places, called the Loberia, the cliffs or barrancas bordering the ocean are of great height, while on the summit there is—an oasis in a desert of sand—a very considerable stretch of comparatively level greensward. It was towards this fatal spot that Santiago and his fiery Bucephalus were approaching at a thundering pace through herds of cattle and flocks of sheep, which they sent scampering in all directions.

Santiago must have become suddenly apprised of the magnitude of his danger, and tried with all his power and cunning to make the animal swerve, even on the edge of the cliff; but to no purpose; and doubtless before even the thought of throwing himself to the ground had had time to filter through his muddled senses, horse and man were launched into space, sheer over the cliff, and were dashed to pieces on the rocky shore hundreds of feet below. Their mangled remains, discovered some days afterwards, partly devoured, were the only clue to the mystery of the fate that had befallen the poor domador.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

English noblemen are the only ones in Europe who ever wear coronets on their heads, and the sole occasion when they do so is at the coronation of the sovereign. They hold them in their hands through the ceremony, and at the moment when the Archbishop of Canterbury places the crown upon the monarch's head every peer and peeress present dons his or her coronet.

Co-operation in shopping is the latest extension of the co-operation principle. It has taken root in Brooklyn, and blossomed in the Sociologic Society. The members of the society are heads of families living in the neighborhood, who buy their groceries, meats, books and other things through a purchasing agent. The agent calls upon them every morning, receives their written order and purchases at wholesale rates. It is an European idea that may prove popular in this country.

A New York paper says that the disappearance of all titles in the French Chamber is shown by a comparison of the Deputies in the new Chamber bearing titles with those returned by the first elections under the Republic. Now there are two princes, three marquises, fifteen counts and forty-five members bearing other titles—or sixty-five in all. In 1871 there were as many as two hundred and twenty-two, the number of princes being the same. The dukes, however, mustered seven strong, the marquises thirty, and counts fifty-two.

The Superior Court of Boston is trying to determine whether or not a corpse can be considered property in a legal sense, and if so, who is the rightful owner. Dennis O'Neil died in Brighton recently. He lived with his mother, having separated from his wife. When he died both mother and wife began preparations for the burial, each securing a different undertaker. The undertaker engaged by the wife appeared at the house, but the mother, aided by several relatives, barred the doors and dismissed him. Since that time the house of mourning has been practically in a state of siege.

A Brooklyn merchant has invented a new device for advertising his goods. "He has equipped a big Newfoundland dog with sandwich boards and turned it loose to wander at will about the city streets. The dog is unusually large and handsome. Fastened on its back is a white oilskin coat, fashioned like an ordinary dog blanket, except that it is so long as to almost sweep the ground, and painted thereon, in vivid colors, is an advertisement of the business of the dog's owner. The dog seems to know his business, too, for he spends most of his time trotting up and down the shopping district of Fulton street, where the crowds are thickest."

"It will surprise some to know that the Rev. Dr. Houghton, rector of The Little Church Around the Corner, in New York, never attends the playhouse," says the Churchman. "He has not won the regard of the actors by lowering his dignity or tarnishing his ideal of the priestly office. To an actor who asked him why he never went to the theatre, he said: 'When you want me to attend the sick or dying, where would you rather find me—in the dress circle or at the rectory?'" It is understood that Dr. Houghton has gained the respect and affection of the profession by his kindness; and that the secret of his influence is not patronage of the drama.

A ghastly drama took place recently in the forest of Gremilly, near Bar-le Duc, France. A middle-aged man named Perignon fell madly in love with Marie Angele Liegois, the 17-year old daughter of a woodcutter. He asked her to marry him, but she steadfastly refused; whereupon he went one day with a double barreled gun in his hand to her father's hut in the forest and shot her dead. Turning his weapon toward the mother he also killed her and then tried to blow out his own brains with a revolver. Liegois, the woodcutter, and his son now arrived and tried to seize the murderer, but Perignon escaped from them, dashed through the woods and drowned himself in a pond.

The New York Court of Appeals holds that the law against Sunday fishing in that State is not only in force, but also that it applies as well against persons owning or leasing private fishing preserves. This is a tighter legal rein than has ever been drawn on the anglers of New York State, a previous decision of the General Term having been that only such fishing and other sports are prohibited as are public and in some way disturb the community; and the fact that the recent decision was by no means unanimous—the vote having been 4 to 3—suggests that the extension of the rule to private waters was probably the point of difference. The Sunday fishing law in its entirety has long been a dead letter in New York as well as in other States, and it would not be surprising if the recent decision should result in its appeal.

In Servia.—The marriageable girls of Servia, at the conclusion of their Christmas feasts, gather bones from the dishes, and, when they can do so unobserved, slip out of doors, dedicate a bone to each maiden, and place the bones side by side. The most favored house-dog is called to select one of the bones. The maiden to whom this selected bone is dedicated is looked upon as the first to be wedded. The second and third bones chosen by the dog foretell the second and third brides to be led from the homestead.

PATENTS

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Our Young Folks.

KINDNESS REWARDED.

BY J. J. LEAK.

IT was a bitterly cold night. The rain descended in torrents, and almost blinded little Nellie and Agnes Henderson as they struggled up the hill towards their comfortable home. Nellie was six years old, while Agnes could boast of two whole years' seniority.

"Why don't you hold the umbrella properly?" Agnes asked, rather sharply. "The rain is spoiling my nice new tie."

"I can't help it; the wind is so strong, and my little fingers are so cold," Nellie responded plaintively.

The sisters walked on in silence for a few yards, and then they were startled by the piteous whining of a dog.

Nellie raised the umbrella as high as she could, and the rain fell straight into the eyes of her sister, making her very angry indeed.

"What a poor little dog it is!" Nellie said sympathetically, as her eyes fell upon the wet and shivering creature.

"What an ugly little wretch it is! Come along home; we shall get wet through if we stand staring at that miserable-looking creature."

Agnes took her sister sternly by the arm, and was about to pull her along. But Nellie's warm heart had been touched by the pitiable condition of the homeless dog.

"I shall take it home," she said, with a good deal of determination.

"What!" said Agnes in a horrified tone of voice. "Surely you will not touch such a dirty thing!" and the prim little maiden tried to hide herself behind the amusing dignity of eight happy years. "If you take it home, you will have to walk by yourself. I would not be seen in the streets with such a howling thing."

But Nellie was not vanquished by this threat, and very tenderly she took the dog under her arm, and proceeded to carry it home.

So absorbed was she in her work of charity that she almost forgot that Agnes had a perfect right to half of the umbrella. At any rate, she devoted all her attention to sheltering the new treasure.

This new outrage was too much for Agnes, so she seized the umbrella, and walked with as much dignity as possible a few yards in front of the queer couple.

Nellie, however, cared nothing for the rain. She tucked the dog under her nice silk mantle, gently stroked its dripping head, and allowed it to return its thanks by licking her hand.

When they reached the garden gate, Agnes turned round and said—

"Nellie, it isn't a bit of use bringing that thing into the house. Mother can't bear dogs, and will not allow such a thing as that to make footprints all over the house; and, of course, it is sure to scamper about just after the floors have been nicely washed."

"Oh yes, mother will let me keep it, for she has always told me to be kind to anything in distress," Nellie replied firmly.

Strong in this belief, Nellie carried the dog into the house. She knew it was not a beautiful dog, and she did not suspect that it was a valuable one, but she felt certain that her mother was too kind to turn it out on such a night.

So a council was held. Mrs. Henderson smiled sweetly as she listened to the narrative of her youngest child.

She adjusted her gold-rimmed spectacles, and took her seat at the head of the table, whilst her boisterous children—six of them—ranged themselves all round.

"Now, my dear children, shall we keep this dog?" she asked kindly.

"No," replied Agnes deliberately.

"Yes," said Jimmy. "I can teach it to eat sugar and stand on its back legs."

All the three boys wanted to keep it, of course; but Agnes and Lucy were strongly opposed to doing so.

The discussion was still going on when Mr. Henderson entered the house. Of course, the whole matter was placed before him with a good deal of childish emphasis.

Just at the critical moment the little dog escaped from the kitchen and ran into the parlor, where the discussion took place. With a sharp bark of delight it jumped on Nellie's knee, and, looking into her face so earnestly, said "Thank you" in its own peculiar fashion.

The mother and father looked kindly upon their children, and said—

"Yes, you'll have to keep it. Always be kind to anything in trouble."

And so Toby, as he was called, became a great favorite with almost everyone. Jimmy had little difficulty in making it eat sugar and stand on its hind legs.

It grew into a big dog with curly hair, and it had such a noble, intelligent face. It followed Nellie almost everywhere, and seemed to feel a special delight in accompanying its little mistress.

Towards the end of the summer Mr. Henderson delighted his children by telling them that he was going to take them to the Isle of Man for a long holiday.

Much to Nellie's disappointment, it was decided not to take Toby; but to her delight, she found the faithful creature sitting quietly under the seat of the railway carriage, just after they had started on their journey.

It was too late to turn it back, so they were compelled to take it. Toby seemed to feel that this decision had been arrived at, for he jumped on Nellie's knees, and laid his head on her shoulders.

A great deal depended upon this apparent accident. On the day following their arrival Mr. Henderson took his children for a row in the beautiful bay of Douglas.

The day was very fine, and the tide came in very peacefully.

"What is that erection, father?" asked Jimmy, who was of an inquisitive turn of mind.

"It is the Tower of Refuge, my boy," Mr. Henderson replied. "You see that the structure is erected upon a huge rock which, at high tide, is covered by the water. Many years ago, before those breakwaters were erected, this bay was a very dangerous one, and large numbers of brave fishermen were dashed upon that rock and drowned. At that time a good and kind gentleman named Sir William Hillary lived upon this island, and when these brave men lost their lives his heart ached for their widows and children. So he did two noble things. He founded the National Lifeboat Association, and built that Tower of Refuge. We will go and inspect it."

The boys took off their caps and shouted with glee. Nellie sat in the prow, stroking the face of her faithful Toby.

But before they reached the Tower a sad accident happened. A small coasting steamer swept round the corner very sharply, and struck the happy party.

In a moment they were all struggling in the water. Fortunately, the tide was low, and the Tower of Refuge stood high and dry above the surface. Mr. Henderson was a fairly good swimmer, and he succeeded in swimming to the rock with Jimmy.

The boatman rescued Bobbie, and the faithful Toby gently seized his young mistress by her dress, lifted his noble head proudly, and almost raised her out of the water.

Bravely he struck out for the Tower, and succeeded in placing her out of danger before the boatman and Mr. Henderson could save their precious burdens.

Only poor, proud, dignified Agnes was without a rescuer, and she was in a very critical position. The water was very deep, and the tide was swiftly carrying her out of the bay towards the sea. The steamer could not reverse her engines in time to render any assistance, and Agnes would have been drowned if it had not been for the "ugly little wretch" which her kind sister had rescued from starvation a few months before.

But Toby seemed to realize the importance of this opportunity for rewarding the kindness of those who had befriended him. Quietly, carefully, he laid Nellie upon the rock, and once more dived into the sea.

Mr. Henderson fainted soon after he reached the rock.

The struggle had been too much for him, for he was a very delicate man. But the boatman saw the struggles of the brave dog, and encouraged it by whistling, and shouting—

"Good dog; fetch her. Brave fellow."

Toby seemed to understand, for his great eyes were full of intelligence. After a hard struggle he seized the little girl, whose pride had vanished in the presence of danger, and he carried her straight towards the Tower of Refuge.

That night the Hendersons were a happy and thankful family. Brave Toby reclined on a luxuriant sheep-skin rug before a cosy fire, and seemed to appreciate the many thanks which were heaped upon him.

Agnes was the most demonstrative in her thanks.

"Let me kiss you, brave old Toby," she said. "You have returned good for evil, but I'll never say another nasty thing about you as long as I live."

Toby nodded his head, as though he knew all about it, and was quite satisfied with his share in the day's misadventure.

"You see, my dear children, how little acts of kindness are sometimes rewarded," said Mr. Henderson. "If Nellie had not taken compassion on that poor starving puppy last winter, we might now have been mourning the loss of two of our darlings. Let us therefore, show our gratitude for what has happened to-day by doing kind acts whenever we have an opportunity."

NO SHOES TO WEAR.

It seems hard to believe it, but there was once a queen who, when she was a little girl, cried because she had no shoes to wear.

And, what is more, her mother cried too, because she did not know how to get any for her small daughter.

They were on board a ship sailing from the West Indies to France. There had been an insurrection in Martinique, and Madame Beauharnais had escaped with her little Hortense in great haste from the island.

She had very little money, and it nearly all went to pay for their passage; so that, even if there had been time to make preparations for the voyage, very few things could have been bought.

As it was, Mademoiselle Hortense went to sea with only one pair of shoes; and being a lively child, constantly running and skipping about, it followed, as a natural consequence, that the shoes wore out.

This the little lady tried hard to keep to herself; she knew that her mother could give her no new ones, and she was very much afraid of having to stay in the cabin instead of frolicking about the deck.

The shoes got worse and worse, toes and heels peeped through, and at last Hortense came back to the cabin with her foot bleeding.

"My dear child, you have hurt yourself!" cried her mother in alarm.

"Oh, it is nothing, mamma," said Hortense, trying to hide her woe-begone little feet. But it was of no use, and Madame Beauharnais discovered that one of them had been torn by a nail, owing to the shoes being all worn to pieces.

"You will not be able to wear these any more," said her mother, whereupon Hortense began to cry, because the cabin was like a prison to the lively child.

Madame Beauharnais was distressed, too, because without air and exercise her daughter would probably fall ill; but how to get another pair of shoes was the question.

Presently an old boatswain, called Jacques, came along, and asked what was the matter. They told him, upon which he said—

"Is that all? Well, I think old Jacques can help you there. I have an old pair of boots in my chest, and if you, madame, will cut them out, I will sew them together as well as I can, and the little lady will at least have shoes on her feet, even if they be but shabby ones."

The kind-hearted sailor went away and fetched the boots, which Hortense received with great delight.

Her mother set to work—and very rough work it was, too—cutting the hard leather. Jacques helped, and by the evening the shoes were finished; a very queer little pair, but what did that matter?

No dainty slippers, small and lovely as Cinderella's, ever gave a child half the pleasure that these clumsy shoes did; for now Hortense was able to go on deck again among her friends the sailors.

After a few weeks she and her mother landed in France, where a brilliant destiny awaited them—brilliant, at least, for a time.

Madame Beauharnais became the wife of Napoleon Bonaparte, and eventually Empress of France; Hortense, when she grew up, married the King of Holland.

So, you see, the girl who was glad to accept a sailor's old shoes lived to become a queen.

THE LEEK.—The Welsh emblem of the leek had its origin in a command from Dewi, or David, afterwards canonised Archbishop of St. David's, in the year 519. This prelate, on the day that King Arthur won a great victory over the Saxons, is said to have ordered every one of his soldiers to place a leek in his cap for the sake of distinction; in memory of which the Welsh wear the leek on the 1st of March.

"HENRY, you know, if we go to the theatre, mamma has to go too as a chaperon." "That's all right, my dear. I have bought three tickets, but unfortunately I could get only two seats together. The odd one however is the best seat in the house; so we'll give that to your mother."

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

British India has 300,000 lepers.

Trained dogs will hereafter aid the French life-savers on the coasts.

Naturalists assert that a healthy swallow devours 6000 flies every day.

Charles Darwin estimated that an acre of pasture land contains 20,000 worms.

The total value of the war material of the French army amounts to nearly $500,000,000.

Several thousands of hair pins, in many styles, have been recovered from Pompeii.

Aluminum is now extensively used in the making of cooking utensils and articles of table ware.

It takes about three seconds for a message to go from one end of the Atlantic cable to the other.

A notable spread of the practice of carrying firearms is reported from Western cities this winter.

Diamond cutters in Holland have succeeded in cutting stones so small that 1500 of them only weigh a carat.

A Parisian was tried for manslaughter because his dog bit a man, causing the latter's death from hydrophobia.

Dr. Furbinger mentions in a German journal that peanuts are a model food for persons suffering from obesity.

It is not generally known that it was not till after the Restoration that two baptismal names were given to the same person.

The superstition concerning the good luck following the finding of a horse-shoe dates back at least to the thirteenth century.

Drunkards in Bangor, Maine, are compelled to pay, in addition to a fine, 50 cents for the ride to the station house in the patrol wagon.

Sunshine falling through a water bottle is the reported origin of a fire recently in the Industrial Home for Girls, at Hampstead, England.

Each year, it is estimated, there is an average of 5000 murders committed in the United States, 130 legal hangings and 900 lynchings.

A hen was recently locked up in a church in Macon county, Georgia, where it is said to have remained 21 days without any nourishment.

A cat which associates almost entirely with chickens, even roosting with them at night-time, is owned by Robert Wiley, of Jonesboro, Ind.

Two boys in Columbia county, Oregon, have successfully used the barbed wire fence for a telegraph line, using pieces of rubber for insulation.

It is a singular fact that there was not a single death last year in the many retreats provided for drunkards, in England, under the Inebriates Act.

The Yezidees, a peculiar Turkish sect, cut off the head of anyone who inadvertently speaks the words devil, Satan, or anything with a similar meaning.

Some of the women of China are beginning to comprehend the folly of compressing the feet. A missionary has been enlightening them on the subject.

China makes a poor show in the journalistic world. For all its 402,000,000 inhabitants it has only 24 newspapers, of which 10 are daily ones and 14 appear at longer intervals.

A judicial decision in Belgium declares that a dog is as much entitled to a seat in a railroad carriage as its owner, provided the latter has bought a ticket for the animal.

The Tower Bridge, at London, now nearing completion, will have cost $4,000,000. In its construction there have been used 24,000,000 bricks, 415,000 tons of granite, and nearly 10,000 tons of iron and steel.

A gray fox on the farm of Thomas Finnegan, near West Chester, Pa., is on good terms with a lot of young beagle dogs, which Mr. Finnegan is raising. The animal plays with the dogs and sleeps in the same pen with them.

According to "Ayer's Catalogue of American Newspapers" for 1894, there are 20,774 newspapers and periodicals published, an increase of 639 over the previous year. Of this number, 19,855 papers are issued in the United States.

A millionaire of Vienna has left provision in his will for the constant illumination of the vault wherein he now lies. An electric light is to be kept burning for a year, and even the coffin is to be lighted in the interior by electricity.

A St. Louis lawyer gives this advice: "Additions to rented premises, when made by the tenant, should never be fastened with nails, but with screws. The reason for this lies in the fact that should he wish to move away and take with him the boards and other lumber composing the improvements he has made, he can simply draw out the screws and take the planks. If he fastens them with nails, however, he can remove nothing, and the improvements become the landlord's property.

RESTLESS REST.

BY W. W. LONG.

'Neath orange trees,
Where southern breeze
Blows softly up and down,
On green earth's breast
I find sweet rest,
Let the winds blow up and down.

The past is dead,
With its ghostly tread—
Blow, winds from east or west;
The skies are fair,
Love's sleeping there,
And life is a restless rest.

DWARFIANA.

Doubtless Captain Lemuel Gulliver somewhat heavily taxed the credulity of his readers when he described the people of Lilliput as being no more than six inches in height; but a belief in the existence of a race of similar diminutive beings, called Pygmies, was widely prevalent among the ancients, and appears to have survived among the moderns until a date even later than that of Swift's famous satire. Most of the early books of voyages and travels contain some reference to such a race.

Sir John Maundeville, for instance, says that in one of the "isles of the sea" there are "dwarfs which have no mouth, but instead of their mouth they have a little round hole," so that they are obliged to suck their food through a straw; while elsewhere there is a land of pygmies who are only three spans long, "and they are right fair and gentle, both the men and the women. They live but six or seven years at most, and he that liveth eight years is considered very aged."

Van Helmont relates that he had received information of a race of pygmies inhabiting the Canary Islands; and others have asserted the existence of such a race in Abyssinia. In Purchas's "Pilgrimes" we are told that in Iceland pygmies represent the most perfect shape of man; that they are hairy to the uttermost joints of their fingers; that the males have beards down to their knees; but that although they have the shape of men, these little people have little sense or understanding, and instead of speech make a hissing sound like geese.

As late as the close of the sceptical eighteenth century, we find a somewhat similar account in the narrative of Rochon, who voyaged to Madagascar about 1770. He asserts that for some time he actually lived amongst a race of dwarfs inhabiting the centre of that island. They were a clever, witty, and bold people he says, and the average height of the men was three feet five inches, while the women were slightly less.

He adds, moreover, that Nature had been good enough to cause the vegetation of the country to grow correspondingly small for the little folks' convenience. Traveler's true tales proverbially used to be taken with a grain of salt, and Rochon, like Sir John Maundeville, seems to have been fully alive to the fact that "men have great liking to hear strange things of diverse countries."

The smallest existing race of men of whom we have any real knowledge, is that of the Bushmen of South Africa, whose average height, according to Mr. E. B. Taylor, is four feet six inches. There is, indeed, a tribe inhabiting the region near Lake Ngami, whose height is asserted to be no more than four feet one inch, but of them we have no very reliable information; and the so-called forest dwarfs who impeded Stanley's march in Central Africa were probably the Akkas, who are believed to measure about four feet ten inches in height.

There is no reliable evidence that among our ancestors, recent or remote, there ever existed a race of people whom it would be correct to describe as dwarfs. The remains of antiquity show that human stature has probably rather increased than diminished, but to so slight a degree that Silberman and other authorities hold that the average height of the human race has remained unchanged since the Chaldean epoch, four thousand years ago.

But, although no race of dwarfs exists, or, probably, ever has existed, numerous individual specimens have flourished in all countries, and in all ages. We find dwarfs mentioned among the attendants kept by ancient Egyptian nobles, as also among the appendages of a Roman noble's household. Domitian even managed to get together a company of dwarf gladiators. At a later date they were commonly used as pages in most of the courts of Europe. They appear frequently on the canvases of Domenichino, Raphael, Velasquez, and other painters, in the suites of nobles or Kings.

In Wierix's illustrated Bible, published in 1594, there is a curious engraving of the feast of Dives, showing Lazarus at the door, and a dwarf, playing with a monkey for the amusement of the guests, within. It is not to be inferred from this that dwarfs were amongst the amusements of rich Jews in Palestine. Curiously enough, dwarfs are only mentioned once in the whole Bible, and even that is a somewhat ambiguous reference, in the Book of Leviticus.

Wierix, like many another artist before and since, played fast and loose with his chronology; and all we are justified in inferring is that he put into his print of the dining-room of Dives, what he had, doubtless, often seen in the dining-rooms of rich men of his own day.

In several European countries, dwarfs superseded the court fools, and were admitted by Kings and Princes to a considerable degree of intimacy. Two Princesses—Catherine de Medicis, and the wife of one of the Electors of Brandenburg—collected as many of both sexes as they could get together, with the object of breeding a race of them; but both attempts proved unsuccessful.

In 1710 Peter the Great celebrated, with great pomp, the marriage of two of his dwarfs at St. Petersburg. He invited courtiers and ambassadors to be present at the ceremony, and also commanded the attendance of all dwarfs, male and female, living within two hundred miles of the capital. Russia seems to have been always well supplied with dwarfs. Porter, who traveled there in the early years of the present century, describes the dwarfs frequently to be met with at the tables of the great. They were, he says, well shaped and even graceful; very different from the deformities exhibited at fairs.

Grains of Gold.

Live with wolves and you will learn to howl.

He that doth what he will doth not what he ought.

People of good sense are those whose opinions agree with ours.

Faith is the greatest builder, and envy the greatest destroyer.

Half the discomfort of life is the result of getting tired of ourselves.

To be really and truly independent is to support ourselves by our own exertions.

It would puzzle an onion to understand what there is about a rose that people like.

To lie about a man never hurts him, but to tell the truth about him sometimes does.

Intellect without judgment is what ails about one-half the smart people in this world.

It is not so much for love of the world that we seek it as to escape our own companionship.

Let friendship creep gently to a height; if it rush to it, it may soon run itself out of breath.

It is easier to enrich ourselves with a thousand virtues than to correct ourselves of a single fault.

A man that is rightly kind never proclaims a good turn, but does another as soon as he can, just like a vine that bears again the next season.

Femininities.

Contentment is natural wealth, luxury is artificial poverty.

Charity is the salt of riches, without which they corrupt themselves.

A car driver at Sheboygan, Mich., has been discharged because it was discovered that she was a woman.

She: "Don't you think Miss Nice is an intellectual-looking girl?" He: "Why, no; I think she is quite pretty."

In Schuyler, Nebraska, lives a recent widower who didn't close his store during his wife's funeral, not wishing to lose a trade.

Mrs. Ellen Spencer Massy succeeded to the practice of her late husband, General Massy, and is one of the most successful lawyers in Washington.

"I—I hardly—how many lodges are you a member of, Hiram?"
"Not one, Katie; not one."
"Well, you may ask papa."

Sanso: "There is one thing that every woman likes to have a finger in."
Rodd: "What is that?"
Sanso: "An engagement ring."

Make your dwelling tasteful and attractive, both within and without; the associations of the home of our early days have a strong influence on the future life.

Flannels and blankets may be soaked in a pail of water containing one tablespoonful of ammonia and a little suds. Rub as little as possible; they will be white and clean.

Miss Huldah Arnold died at Milford, Mass., recently, at the reputed age of over 104 years. At the age of 14 she began smoking to relieve the asthma, and thereafter was an inveterate smoker.

Nothing keeps out moths so well as paper. If every housewife, when she puts away her furs, pasted up all the crevices and round the lid of the box with paper, she would find her furs intact when unpacked.

Miss Kate Sanborn says of the programmes at women's clubs: The papers are usually too long-winded and too labored. They are exhaustive, usually going back to the beginning of the world to explain the present subject.

Recently a letter of introduction was handed by an actor to a manager which described the presenter as an actor of much merit, and concluded, "He plays Virginius, Richelieu, Hamlet, Shylock and Billiards. He plays Billiards the best."

Jack, to his fiancee: "I think of getting a musical instrument, Maud. Say, perhaps, a cornet." Maud, in dismay: "Oh, no, not that horrid thing." Jack, in surprise: "And why not, dearest?" Maud, blushing violently: "It makes the lips so hard."

A simple test for the purity of coffee is to put a tablespoonful into a tumblerful of cold water and let it stand for a while. Pure coffee does not readily impart color to cold water, while adulterated coffee soon gives it an amber color, gradually changing to deep brown.

Smelling bottles are costly and exquisite enough in these days for a princess' use. A Parisian one of pure rock crystal had a wreath of forget-me-nots of turquoises, with enameled leaves twined around it, and was finished around the repousse gold top with a ribbon of rubies and diamonds.

"Mary," called the husband upstairs, "why don't you come down? Haven't you finished your letter yet?"
"I finished the letter long ago!"
"What keeps you, then?"
"I am writing the postscript."
"Gracious me! Have I got to mind this baby two hours longer?"

The Sultan has a hobby. It is carpentry and cabinet work. Before he came to the throne, and when there seemed little prospect of his succeeding to the heritage of Osman, he spent a good deal of time in the joiner's shop, and became a fairly skilful workman, capable of shouldering his tools and earning his living anywhere.

Following the good example of the Street Cleaning Aid Society, a New York organization of women, the members of the Woman's Health Protective Association are pledging themselves to see to it that the sidewalks in front of their homes shall be swept every morning, and that the street shall be kept free from the litter which belongs in garbage or ash barrels.

Miss Mathilde Blind, daughter of Karl Blind, while in Scotland was prompted to write one of her most important poems, "The Heather on Fire," a dramatic story of the woes of the crofters. Miss Blind wrote it after a stay in the island of Arran, where an old peasant woman aroused her indignation by her account of an eviction there.

The great Parisian dressmakers have a custom of charging a married woman more for her gown than an unmarried woman is asked. An American lady in Paris recently commented upon this difference, which she had observed to the extent of $50 in two dresses identically alike. "Ah!" exclaimed the great modiste, "why not? Madam has a husband to pay her bills, but mademoiselle's dot must be looked out for, so that she may get a husband."

Masculinities.

Abel Head, of Boston, has two brothers, named Ernest Head and Willing Head.

Brewer county, Kan., has a man who can husk and crib 135 bushels of corn in ten hours.

John C. Smith, of Brazil, Ind., is the father of 35 children, all of whom are said to be living.

There are 21 law firms in the United States that are conducted jointly by husbands and wives.

No Japanese is ever guilty of swearing, for the very good reason that oaths are unknown to the Japanese language.

When you meet a young man who takes pride in being cynical, you generally have some excuse for being cynical yourself.

Peter Hart, colored, who died at Moberly, Mo., recently, aged 104 years, was the father of, it is said, 76 children. While a slave he had 13 masters.

A Topeka woman who applied for aid spent the dollar that was given her to buy coal for a pink-wool fascinator that was going at a great bargain.

Yuet Lee is reported to be the first Chinaman to bring suit for divorce in a civil court of New York State. He first met his erring wife at Sunday school.

Parisian shopkeepers say that photographs of actresses and society women are sold in large numbers, but that pictures of public men are rarely purchased.

Charles Ridabock, formerly a wealthy New Yorker, recently gained admission to the San Francisco almshouse. He is 91 years old, and has for years been penniless.

Zeal for the public good is the characteristic of a man of honor and a gentleman, and must take the place of pleasures, profits and all other private gratifications.

Sims Reeves, England's famous tenor, receives $7.30 per hour for teaching at the London Guildhall School. This is in addition to the fees he receives from private pupils.

A reporter who has been at pains to interview several Pullman porters learns that their pay ranges from $10, on some trains west of Chicago, to $35 per run, out some time ago from $35.

A young man of Cincinnati, who recently married a woman 17 years his senior, at Savannah, Ga., has brought suit for divorce on the ground that she magnetized him so that he married her against his will.

Secretary Herbert has issued an order that no person in the United States Navy shall write for a newspaper or magazine on any subject whatever without first having secured permission from the Secretary.

Edward Dunbar, once a noted evangelist, and author of the hyms "There's a Light in the Window for Thee, Brother," died lately in the Coffeyville, Kansas, jail, where he had applied for lodgings as a tramp.

An enterprising manager is endeavoring to get Blondin, the veteran tight rope performer, to revisit Niagara next summer and repeat his feat of carrying a man across the falls on his shoulders upon a tight rope.

The British Board of Trade reports that in 1892 there were 21 passengers killed in train accidents in the United Kingdom. In the same year there were 116 passengers killed in the same class of accidents in the United States.

A fine of $5 having been provided by the town of Mankato, Kansas, for every person caught publicly whistling "After the Ball" there, Charles H. Harris, author of the song, offers to put up the money for the first 20 so fined.

Conductor James McEntee, of the Union Pacific Railroad, claims to have recently lassoed a deer with a bell cord, an experience that is vouched for by the train hands. The train was going at full speed near Echo, Utah Territory, at the time.

Brown: "Tell me, do you think that Smith ever says what isn't exactly true?"
Jones: "Well, I shouldn't like to charge Smith with untruthfulness; but, if he himself believes one-hundredth part of the stories he tells, he must be the most credulous man alive."

Until a man can control his own nature, with its various desires and passions, thoughts and emotions, actions and expressions, he cannot acquire that real strength which will enable him to conquer the difficulties of life or to obtain any true influence over others.

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes being asked recently if a young man should smoke, emphatically replied: "Certainly not. It is liable to injure the sight, to render the nerves unsteady, to enfeeble the will, and to enslave the nature to an imperious habit likely to stand in the way of duty to be performed."

A Boston lawyer relates that not long ago a jury went out early in the day on a simple case, and, when it had got near time for the Court to rise, his Honor sent for them. He asked the foreman if they required any further instruction. The foreman replied: "Your Honor, here are eleven pig-headed men who won't agree to anything."

LATEST FASHION PHASES.

A pretty style has the top of the skirt finished with a narrow roll of velvet or a band of passementerie, which fastens over the bodice. Sashes of moire or satin are knotted below the fullness upon Princess gowns, or are tied in a butterfly bow upon the back of the bodice.

Moire, after a brief period of banishment, seems to lead in silks; it comes in a great variety of styles, in satin and moire stripes, in the "watered silk" of our grandmothers and in the rich brocaded moires; black is in the ascendant, but elegant dinner gowns are made of black with brocaded designs in all the new colorings and in floral patterns. Brocaded satin vie in popularity with the moires. Raised velvet figures on a satin ground are new. Velvet stripes, alternating with those of satin or silk, are showy. Decidedly new is a stripe of black or cardinal velvet with one of checked black and white between.

Satins are exceedingly fashionable and are just the thing for dressy costumes made up in the quaint styles of the Louis Philippe era. Black is by far the most used, although the rich dark colors and the light evening shades are greatly liked; satin is much liked for the large balloon sleeves and also for the voluminous collars, cuffs and flaring revers.

An old-world collarette is composed of fine lace insertion and white satin. The falling collar is of satin vandykes, arranged with the points upward, and joined with rows of insertion. On the lower edge a rich white satin ribbon, three inches in width, is gathered on rather full, and on the outer edge of this is a frill of lace. The high band for the throat is of white satin covered with lace.

An attractive front for bodice is made in the shape of a waistcoat with revers. The former is represented with primrose silk gauze. Five tiny tucks are run nearly close together, then the threads are drawn to give the necessary fullness. These tucks are repeated three times down the front. The revers are of silk, covered with lace and edged with narrow lace, and very full epaulettes off wide lace commence at the neckband and fall low over the sleeves. The band is of tucked lisse drawn full over primrose silk.

Among the model gowns in an uptown house is a novelty made of cross green cloth, the skirt edged with mink fur three inches wide. The Queen Anne sleeves have the fur at the wrists, and a Vandyke collarette is similarly edged. The round waist is finished with a folded belt, and above the gored skirt is a pointed drapery of gray ladies' cloth laid in flat folds front and back, the folds extending to the selvedge edge of the overskirt, which is short on the sides, the point in front and at the back, however, extending nearly to the fur trimming on the underskirt.

With the blouse bodices, as a matter of necessity, buckles have come into fashion again for waistbands; they are large, and of many new shapes. One of the novelties is an untarnishable steel, another is in a rococo design, and in a mixture of many colors associated with it. Black and white enamel is shown to advantage in a new shape, where, besides the oblong centerpiece, there are smaller projections on either side about half the length. The Russian Byzantine work in filigree, with multi-colored jewels introduced, is new and pretty applied to buckles; but it has this disadvantage, that lace is apt to catch in it. It accords, however, well with the multi-colored stuffs now much worn.

Fichus, frills and pelerines of lace, striped silk gauze, and soft silk lisse are the order of the day. These are very easily "tossed up," and they make delightfully pretty presents. A white China crepe fichu, striped with closely woven lines of silk, is a square folded crosswise, and is edged with a wide gathered frill. This is a lovely gift for an elderly lady.

All sorts of variations of the mutton-leg sleeve still maintain. Every dressmaker improvises her own most novel successes. The tight sleeve fitting the arm as far as the elbow, and met there with an enormous puff drooping from the shoulder, is almost invariably formed of two materials, the upper part silk, brocade or velvet. Many modistes drape the drooping chatelaine puff. Just a few of the quaint 1840 sleeves are shown tucked in snugly about the arm at the top and flaring out excessively toward the elbow. All manner of Empire sleeves with a single or double puff at the top are very advantageous for remodeling handsome dresses. An effective sleeve for a dressy toilet drapes in a puff at the top, and falls thence in a deep frill of lace caught up on the inside of the arm. The Marie Antoinette model has lace frills falling from the elbow, and the Venetian sleeve has a slashed puff at the top showing glimpses of contrasting color. The effect is obtained by lining the puff itself with satin, and draping it on a close sleeve beneath.

Moires are now having what we might style a most successful run for this purpose, that is, moire antique, but still its scope is a limited one. It is expensive and not showy for the price, which will prevent the popular trade from handling it, but exclusive stores and first-class modistes favor it for entire costumes as well as for trimmings. Black, white, light colors having chine figures or satin stripes and medium tints of green, brown, heliotrope and red, are selling in moire for evening, theatre, day wedding and calling costumes, with heavy white guipure laces, fur, jet, and velvet for the trimming. Fur is a rage in Paris and is fast arriving at that point here as well.

There are pretty new droguets in tiny patterns of dots or diamonds. Some of them have a chined ground and fine satin streaks.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

Eggs.—To determine the exact age of eggs dissolve about four ounces of common salt in a quart of pure water and then immerse the egg. If it be only a day or so old, it will sink to the bottom, but if it be three days old it will float in the liquid. If more than five, it comes to the surface and rises about in proportion to its increased age.

A Good Cement.—A good cement for mending almost anything may be made by mixing together litharge and glycerine to the consistency of thick cream or fresh putty. This cement is useful for mending stone jars or any coarse earthenware, stopping leaks in seams of tin pans, wash-boilers, cracks and holes in iron kettles, etc. Holes an inch in diameter in kettles can be filled and used the same for years in boiling water and feed. It also may be used to fasten on lamp-tops, to tighten loose nuts, to secure bolts whose nuts are lost, to tighten loose joints of wood or iron, loose boxes in wagon hubs, and in a great many other ways. In all cases the articles mended should not be used until the cement is hardened, which will require from one day to a week, according to the quantity used. This cement will resist the action of water, hot or cold, acids, and almost any degree of heat.

Corning Beef.—Cut the beef in small pieces, leaving out the large bones, pack solid in a six-gallon crock with a weight on top. Pour over the beef boiling-hot brine made as follows: Two gallons of water, three pounds of salt, one ounce of saltpetre, a pound of sugar and two large spoonfuls of baking soda. After two weeks, heat and skim the brine, and repeat the process whenever you think necessary, but never put the brine on hot after the first time. If the weather is hot you can add a handful of salt and soda at any time, and like all pickling be sure the brine covers the beef. If packed in a barrel, a large cloth should be securely tied over it in summer, to secure its contents from flies. The nicest vessel to put it into is a half barrel earthen jar.

The Use of a Broom.—As simple as the advice may seem, but very few people handle a broom properly, although they are accustomed to sweep more or less every day of their lives. There is science in handling a broom, as well as in many other kinds of labor. Always draw your broom, by leaning the handle forward, because the portion of the broom will take the dirt along more gently; it will sweep cleaner; it will not wear out the carpet so fast. Your broom will be kept in proper shape and not half so much dust will be raised to be afterwards wiped from your furniture. Most careless sweepers thrust their broom forward of them in a sort of a digging way, with the handle inclining towards them. This way you will find breaks your broom, flirts up more dust, and makes the sweeping much more laborious.

Discolorations from Matches.—What neat housekeeper is not annoyed when she sees on the spotless woodwork of door or windows those long dark scratches which reveal that some one has tried to light a match by drawing it across the paint? Now this is sometimes our experience, for servants will be forgetful or careless, and the tell-tale scratches greet our eyes in most unlooked-for quarters. But we have found a remedy for the marks, which, as every one knows, quite defy soap and water. Cut a sour orange or lemon in half, apply the cut half to the marks, rubbing for a moment quite hard; then wash off with a clean rag, dipped first in water to moisten it, and then in whiting. Rub well with this rag, dry thoroughly, and nine times out of ten the ugly mark will vanish. Of course, sometimes they are burned in so deeply that they cannot be quite eradicated. All finger-marks on painted walls, etc., should be rubbed off with a little damp whiting in the same way, and never washed with soapsuds, which destroys the paint.

You need not be afraid of the twinge of rheumatism when you have Salvation Oil.

CHARACTER IN CATS.

I don't know whether anybody has ever noticed it, or whether it is only fancy, but I think the character of a cat can be read in its face and in its general markings.

Tim, one of my earliest pets, was obviously an overbearing, truculent fellow. His bulky, abnormal head, flat face, and heavy underjaw exactly indicated his character, for he was never quiet, so to speak, unless he was fighting.

When he came home one morning, half of him was missing, having been left behind, in scraps, on the field of battle; but that very afternoon he tackled a cock that had long held undisputed sway in our back garden.

The bird drew first blood. After digging its spurs into Tim's sides, it flew on his back and began pecking at his head with a ferocity that quickly drew what sporting writers call the "claret." Tim, however, rolled over, and, dislodging the cock, made it feathers fly in all directions. Had we not interfered, he would quickly have killed it.

We had another cat, "Old Girl," who looked just what she was—a kind and affectionate mother. Two of her sons also lived with us. Occasionally the elder of these went into the country for a week or two.

As soon as he returned, the other walked across the room and "went for him." Then the Old Girl rose, yawned, shook her head, and threw herself between them, giving a slap right and left, and maintaining a threatening attitude until the combatants settled down quietly on the hearthrug.

What surprised me was that the boys, when parental authority was thus exercised, did not forget filial obligations and hit back on their mother.

In a sleek, beautifully-marked, long-whiskered cat, I expect to find indolence and cowardice, and I have rarely been disappointed. I was very fond of one such animal; but at times he used to try me very much. He had a trick of getting to the bottom of a made bed without disarranging the clothes or showing in any way that he had effected an entrance. The result was that sometimes, when you were dozing off to sleep, your feet encountered the rascal, and the sensation was not at all pleasant.

One night I was aroused by piercing shrieks. Going upstairs, I found that master Tiger had just been violently ejected from the nurse-girl's bed.

The lass had had such a fright that afterwards she made it a practice to see that no cat was secreted under the sheets.

A great pet of ours—very similar in appearance and character to Tiger—met with an adventure much like that which befell Theophile Gautier's cat. One day I saw Jack—for that was his name—crawling stealthily down our garden towards a parrot which belonged to our next-door neighbors. The bird did not see him; its back was towards the enemy, and it was intently watching some swallows engaged in nest-building.

For a few moments I was thunderstruck by the impending outrage. But when Jack was about a couple of yards from its marked prey, I shouted. The cat did not heed me; the parrot instantly turned round, and, catching sight of its threatening adversary, immediately burst into laughter. The effect on poor Jack was extraordinary. He put his tail between his legs, quailed visibly, and leaped over the wall in the utmost terror.

As day after day passed without our seeing anything of him, I thought he had been frightened out of his wits and was wandering aimlessly many miles away; but about a week afterwards he came up the garden-walk with his old swagger, winking at me as who should say, "I did not want to hurt it."

Our neighbors being told about this incident, taught their parrot to call Jack. One night they brought the bird into our house, when that animal lay asleep on the couch. The parrot, on seeing him, called "Jack! Jack!"

The conscious-haunted wretch started up and immediately slunk out of the room, and once more be absented himself from home for a week.

BULFINCH: "How is that little mining scheme of yours getting along? Any money in it?" Wooden: "Any money in it? Well, I should say so! All of mine, all of my wife's, and about fifty thousand that I got from my friends."

Why suffer with asthma when the famous Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup will cure you.

Do you want to laugh? get that inimitable book "Samantha at Saratoga" and you can't help laughing. In that book "Josiah Allen's Wife," in a vein of strong common sense, yet pure and innocent as a child, keeps the reader crammed with the sharpest hits and funniest observations spiced with stinging sarcasm and flavored with sound moral lessons, as she takes off, in her inimitable, mirth-provoking style, the Follies, Flirtations, Pug Dogs, Low-Neck Dressing, Water Craze, Josiah's Perversities, Tobogganing, Roller-Skating, and a thousand other curious things that one of her keen sense of the humorous discovers in That World of Gayety at Saratoga. It is indeed the funniest book yet. See offer on another page.

CURING THE POODLE.—Some years ago there lived in the West of Scotland an old man who had once been huntsman to a nobleman, but being disabled for that kind of duty, he obtained by interest the appointment of village postman. Being known to have great skill in the curing of dog's ailments he was often called upon to prescribe for them, and in this way increased his modest wages considerably.

One day calling with letters at the house of a lady she asked him to go in to see her dog, which she thought was ill, as it would not touch food of any description, though she had tried it with all kinds of dainties.

He looked at the poodle, told her he knew what was the matter with it, that he could cure it, but that she would have to allow him to take it home for a little, as it needed constant attention. This she agreed to, adding that if he brought it back cured she would pay him liberally.

He took it away, and at the appointed time brought it back quite lively and frisky, and at his suggestion the lady gave it some food, which it eagerly devoured. She was delighted, and paid Tommy the promised sum.

"Now," she said, "you must give me your recipe."

"Oh, weel, my lady," he said, "I just gied it whamleum."

Nothing more could she get out of him; but he confided to a friend that he had put the dog through a short course of starvation.

SOME retail silk salesman have a clever sleight-of-hand trick that deceives many purchasers. The little game is to snatch up a sample of silk in the presence of a customer, pretend with violent gestures to twist it into a rope, and then with a sudden flout to shake it free of folds and creases. Any woman knows that silk such as will undergo treatment of that sort is durable; but the woman who buys the silk and tries the experiment at home meets with grievous disappointment. The salesman's twisting process has been a clever make-believe.

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THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

726 Sansom St., Phila., Pa.

SHEPHERD AND SHEEP.—In a certain mining district of Scotland, years ago, the people had the reputation of being very free-and-easy in manners and morals. The minister was the only person who had much influence over them, and he maintained it by original methods.

An assistant who was appointed to help him found the place no sinecure. The people were accustomed, not only to treat him very cavalierly, but to help themselves to his belongings whenever they got an opportunity.

One day he had been visiting at a cottage, and on leaving it found that he was minus his purse, containing all he possessed. Re-entering, he inquired politely whether the inmate, an old woman, had seen it.

"Na, no me," she declared; and he had to leave.

He laid his case before his superior and sought counsel.

"Tuts, you have a deal to learn, seeking your gear in that daft-like manner. Come and I'll see about it."

They arrived at the cottage and entered.

"Whaur's Mag Samson?" inquired the elder gentleman.

"Here, yer honor," said a voice from the corner; and the lady came forward.

"Mag, ye auld thief, if ye dinna gie back that purse before I coont thirty, I'll bring my stick ower yer back.' Noo, one, two—"

Before he had reched ten, the purse was restored, the visitors had departed, and Mag ruminated—

"Eh, but the auld ane's the bonnie man, an diana' he speak firm till a body! I declare I wad turn a thochtie careless if it wasna for that saintly man."

DEAF AND DUMB.—Jones was sauntering about at the Press-view of the Academy, and chanced to meet a friend, a deaf-mute, who was conversing with a companion in sign-language. Greeting Jones cordially, the deaf-mute drew out a note-book and pencil, and, after a brief pencil-and-paper conversation, introduced his companion by the same means, and shortly after withdrew.

Jones and the stranger discussed the pictures pleasantly for twenty minutes or more, meanwhile covering the backs of sundry envelopes and scraps of paper with their pencilings, when a fourth character in this little drama came upon the scene—a friend of Jones's new-made acquaintance.

"Hallo, George," said the dumb man to the new-comer familiarly—"how do you like the pictures this year?"

"By Jove," exclaimed Jones, in surprise—"can you talk?"

"Of course I can," said the gentleman, equally surprised, as he hastily put away pencil and paper. "Aren't you deaf and dumb?"

"Not by a long way," Jones replied, thrusting into his pocket an envelope nearly covered with pencil-marks; "but I'll kill Dummy next time I see him!"

A DESIRABLE PLACE TO LIVE IN.—We were seated in a fairly-filled third-class carriage of an express not timed to make a stoppage for an hour or so, and during the first half of this period one of the passengers—a very excitable and withal voluble individual—loudly inveighed against things in general, and the places he happened to have visited in particular. All at once a quiet and sedate old gentleman, who had up to then sat silently in one corner, remarked—

"How would you like to live in a place where no one drank any intoxicating liquor nor even smoked a cigar?"

"It would be excellent," replied the grumbler.

"And where everyone went to church on Sundays?"

"That would be a delightful place."

"And where no one stole, or forged, or cheated?"

"But such a thing is impossible. Tell me where is there such a perfect place?"

"You will find it in any of her Majesty's prisons," was the quiet reply; and the grumbler was silent for the remainder of the journey.

SUE (with emotion)—"Do you truly care for me just as much as when we were first engaged?" He (with conviction)—"Yes, lovely, every single bit as much." And at the time this conversation took place they had been engaged just fourteen hours, eight minutes and twenty-five seconds.

GRACE—"And so you are really going to marry that widow after all? And I hear you are going to give up smoking." Carruths—"Yes, a mutual agreement; she gives up her weeds and I give up mine."

BEAUTY is only skin deep, but it will get a seat in the horse-car every time.

WHERE EIDER DOWN IS PROCURED.—At this season of the year, when an eider-down quilt is a thing not to be despised, it may be interesting to give a few particulars as to how the down is obtained.

In the holes and cavities between the hummocks of Iceland the eider ducks may be seen sitting on their nests. Of these there are several scores, and the birds themselves when sitting are perfectly tame, some of them even allowing a stranger to stroke them with the hand.

The duck lays five or six eggs at the beginning of June, and the period of laying lasts some six or seven weeks, during which time the birds are in the habit of laying three times in different places.

From the first and second of these, both the down and eggs are taken away, but from the last it is very seldom that the farmer removes either. Should he do so with any degree of persistency, the birds will desert the locality, and he thus destroys the ducks with the golden eggs.

In some cases the owner resides on or near the farm, and when he and his men arrive at the nest they carefully remove the female and take away the superfluous down and eggs. The duck immediately begins to lay afresh, and covers her eggs with new down, which she plucks from her own breast. If the supply is inadequate, the male comes to her assistance and helps to cover the eggs with his down. This being white is easily distinguished from the brown covering which the female supplies, and is not so good in quality.

The nest is now, as a general rule, left until the little ones are hatched, and as they quit the nest about an hour afterwards it is then once more plundered. This down is divided into seaweed down and grass down. The latter is generally considered to be the better in quality.

RATHER MORTIFYING.—A certain Madame S., a woman of high social ambitions, returning from the country to town one day in a railway carriage, fell into conversation with a well-dressed but quiet and reserved man, who sat on the seat opposite.

After a while, she chanced to mention impressively that she had observed that the Countess L—— was a passenger in the next carriage; and she found that the gentleman to whom she had been talking was intimately acquainted with her. Of the countess's establishment and circle of friends he told her a great many interesting particulars.

So pleased was she with the talk on this subject—proving her new acquaintance, she thought, to be a man of high position in society—that she ventured to make what was even for her a bold stroke, and asking him for his card, politely requested the pleasure of his company at her next soiree.

The train arrived. Madame S. alighted on the same platform with the countess. She looked, to see the familiar recognition she expected between the lady of rank and her new friend. But what was her surprise when the countess, holding up her finger, beckoned unceremoniously to him and said—

"John, see to the luggage!"

He was the countess' man servant.

WHY THEY KEEP A GOAT.—"Scores of people have put the same question to me, 'How is it that nowadays in stables where horses are kept, there is often a goat?'

"You don't know why? Then I'll tell you. Although we are fully insured, the loss of our horses would seriously affect business; and as you can never be sure, in a place where hundreds of hands are employed, that some careless workman will not throw down a lighted match and set the place ablaze, it don't do to rest content just because your yearly premium is paid.

"What's that got to do with the goat? I'm going to tell you. Horses are mortally afraid of fire; they won't face it on any account, but a goat will; and knowing this peculiar fact, many careful owners now keep one on the premises, assured that if a fire breaks out the goat will have a shot for safety, blaze or no blaze, and, like a lot of sheep, if the goat goes, the horses will follow.

"That, sir, is why, where many animals are kept, you'll often see a 'Nanny' or a 'Billy' about."

FOR WHOM DO THEY DRESS.—The question is one that always interests the public. A large number of respectable people hold that women dress to please men. Another class, equally numerous, insist that they project and execute elegant toilets in order to provoke the admiration and envy of other women. The obvious truth is that women clothe themselves in tasteful and beautiful fabrics because they are women.

It is a fact to be thankful for that all the fads of all the reformers in creation cannot reform the inherent delight of the civilized woman in beautiful and graceful things. If she lived in a country without a man in it, she would still regard the fit and hue of her garments as matters of essential importance.

Of course women are not unmindful of the opinion of the opposite sex. They like admiration when it is respectful, and they are a great deal happier when their dress is cordially praised by the one particular man whose approbation they value above most things terrestrial.

But they select their garb, primarily, not to gain masculine flattery, but in obedience to the dominant instinct which makes the modern woman a constantly refining and uplifting force.

JOSIAH.

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(MARIETTA HOLLEY.)

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INSTANTANEOUS GUIDE TO THE

PIANO OR ORGAN

Anyone knowing a tune, either "in the head," as it is called, or able to hum, whistle or sing, can play it WITHOUT ANY PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC OR THE INSTRUMENTS. In fact it may be the first time they have ever seen a piano or organ, yet if they know so much as to whistle or hum a tune—say "Way Down on the Swanee River," for instance—they can play it IMMEDIATELY correctly and with good effect, on the piano or organ, with the assistance of this GUIDE. THE GUIDE shows how the tunes are to be played with both hands and in different keys.

It must be understood that the Guide will not make an accomplished musician without study. It will do nothing of the kind. What it can do, do well and WITHOUT FAIL is to enable anyone understanding the nature of a tune or air in music to play such tunes or airs, without ever having opened a music book.

By giving the student the power to play IMMEDIATELY twelve tunes of different character—this number of pieces being sent with each Guide—the ear grows accustomed to the sounds, and the fingers used to the position and touch of the keys. So, after a very little practice with the Guide, it will be easy to pick out, almost with the skill and rapidity of the trained player, any air or tune that may be heard or known.

The Guide will be sent to any address, all postage paid, on receipt of FIFTY CENTS. Postage stamps, 2's, taken. For Ten Cents extra a music book containing the words and music for 100 popular songs, will be sent with The Guide. Address—

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Honorably discharged soldiers and sailors who served ninety days, or over, in the late war, are entitled, if now partially or wholly disabled for ordinary manual labor, whether disability was caused by service or not, and regardless of their pecuniary circumstances.

WIDOWS of such soldiers and sailors are entitled (if not remarried) whether soldier's death was due to army service or not, if now dependent upon their own labor for support. Widows not dependent upon their own labor are entitled if the soldier's death was due to service.

CHILDREN are entitled (if under sixteen years) in almost all cases where there was no widow, or she has since died or remarried.

PARENTS are entitled if soldier left neither widow nor child, provided soldier died in service, or from effects of service, and they are now dependent upon their own labor for support. It makes no difference whether soldier served or died in late war or in regular army or navy.

Soldiers of the late war, pensioned under one law, may apply for higher rates under other laws, without losing any rights.

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Soldiers and sailors disabled in line of duty in regular army or navy since the war are also entitled, whether discharged for disability or not.

Survivors, and their widows, of the Black Hawk, Creek, Cherokee and Seminole or Florida Indian Wars of 1832 to 1842, are entitled under a recent act.

Mexican War soldiers and their widows also entitled, if sixty-two years of age or disabled or dependent.

Old claims completed and settlement obtained, whether pension has been granted under later laws or not.

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Humorous.

A LOVER'S TRYST.

Come into the garden, Maud:
I am waiting here alone,
And my heart glows warm for your presence, love,
Though my feet are cold as stone—
For the dews are chill to-night
And the breezes sharp and bleak;
Oh, come, with the clasp of your warm soft hand
And the touch of your glowing cheek!

She is coming! My heart beats high
As I hasten my love to greet.
She is coming! My pulses start and thrill
At the sound of her fairy feet.
She has stepped on the gravelled walk,
And I hear the gate ajar;
Fly, fly to your lover's arms, my own!
Jerusalem, 'tis her pa!

—U. N. None.

The man of note is one who never pays his debths.

The cannibal does not believe that one man's meat is another man's poison.

Nell: "Why have you broken with Jack?" Belle: "Why, you see, I thought he was going to propose the other night, and the mean thing only asked me if I loved him well enough to be a sister to him."

"If you please, Mrs. Covenhoven," said a child, presenting herself before a back-door neighbor, "mother wants to know if you will be kind enough to lend her that bowlful of sugar you borrowed and forgot to return, the other day?"

Earl of Nawthin: "I am so happy, dear, because I am sure you are not marrying me for my money!"

Miss Veritich, of the Milwaukee Veritiches: "And I, love, because you are not marrying me for my social rank."

Molly: "Don't you wish you were a boy?"

Lucy: "No; I is glad I isn't."

Molly: "Why?"

Lucy: "'Cause mamma says I is bad, an' I know if I was a boy I'd be badder."

Mr. Isaacs: "I sells you dot coat at a grend sacrifice."

Customer: "But you say that of all your goods. How do you make a living?"

Mr. Isaacs: "Main friend, I makes a schmall profit on de paper and shtring."

He: "Well, we won't quarrel any more about it, but just let it go as it is, eh?" She: "Yes; but, George, dear, for the sake of the future—and a harmonious future—I think you would better acknowledge before we drop it altogether that you were wrong. Don't you, dear?"

"My dear," timidly ventured Mr. N. Peck, as his wife stood at the ticket-window arguing with the agent, "there are more than 40 people behind you, getting madder every minute." "I don't care!" snapped Mrs. Peck. "Forty people are not going to get any madder than just one."

Interviewer: "I asked Assemblyman Sevenelghths this afternoon whom he thought the greatest man in this country."

Editor: "What did he say?"

Interviewer: "That that was a matter upon which his constituents were more competent to speak than himself."

"Did you hear about Dolly Footlites cow-hiding that reporter?"

"Yes. What was the trouble?"

"She objected to the order in which he constructed his sentences. He wrote that she was accompanied on her tour by a maid, a parrot, two pug dogs and a husband."

"Reginald," she said to a wealthy young dandy who had been paying his attentions to her, "I should like to ask you one very serious question."

"What is it, my dear?" he replied.

"Would you object to marry mamma if I refused you? You see, we really don't want to lose you!"

A lady who was about to be married entered a printing office and ordered a number of invitations to be printed. The proprietor, a jovial sort of man, thinking he ought to say something, remarked: "It seems to me that any one who marries in these hard times has considerable courage." "Well," replied the lady, "we are all out of work and we've got to do something, you know."

Richard: "What kind of a girl is Miss Zephyr, anyway? Is she much on of a conversationalist?"

Thomas: "That's where she excels. I played whist with her last evening, and if it had not been for her, there would hardly have been any conversation at all. But she was the life of the table. She always had something appropriate to say, such as 'What's trumps?' 'Is it my play?' etc."

A New York paper observes that persons who believe in luck and signs will doubtless agree that it is unlucky to be struck by lightning on Monday, or take hold of a circular saw in motion on Tuesday, or tumble down stairs with a coal scuttle on Wednesday, or to be hit by a cable car on Thursday, or fall overboard on Friday, or marry on Saturday a girl who swings ten-pound dumbbells, or be one of 13 for dinner on Sunday when there is food for only 10.

SUBMISSION TO DUTY.—How are we to acquire the habit of submission to the voice of duty? It does not come of itself; it is a growth, and its beginnings are very far back. It is for this reason chiefly that authority is necessary in youth—that obedience is one of the most essential parts of early training. It is not a temporary expedient, used for immediate purposes and to be cast aside as soon as may be; it is an enduring principle, the active employment of which is needed through all the changes of life. The child who is carefully taught to obey, first his parents, then his employers, as the case may be, who is accustomed to yield his desires, to conquer his passions, to submit to needful restraint, to make sacrifices for others, has gained a power which will never forsake him. He has learned a lesson of self-control and self-government which could never have been his if a mistaken indulgence or a crude idea of liberty had left him free to follow his own devices.

TALENT.—The value to the world of any natural gift or talent depends on two separate powers—that of producing excellent work, and that of bringing it to the notice of those who can appreciate and use it. Very few persons unite in themselves these two capabilities. It is a rare thing to find a man or a woman possessing a very marked talent in some one department, and also the tact, the judgment, the knowledge of the world needful to make the most and the best of it. Many indeed have a limited share of each, and may to that degree be successful in their pursuits; but the highest and finest abilities in production usually so fully absorb the performer that he has neither ability nor inclination to push them into public notice. Thus it often happens that special excellence is hidden from the world, and society is deprived of its beneficent results.

BOYS AND BOOKS.—"You have done a great thing when you have brought a boy to have entertainment from a book," observes Dr. Johnson; and whoever has had the training of young folk, especially of youths who did not naturally take kindly to reading, is likely to agree with him most fully. Certainly the most essential and often the most difficult part of a boy's education is just this point of teaching him to care for reading. Once this is done, the hardest part of the battle is over. It is a careless or a dull parent who cannot do much for a boy's mind if once he has got him to be fond of reading. It is after that a question of guidance; and, if they are not driven, there is little that cannot be done in the way of guidance when one is training boys.

WARMING ROOMS.—In warming a room by low pressure steam one square foot of plate or pipe surface will heat from 40 to 100 cubic feet of the enclosed space. The range from 40 to 100 feet is to meet the different exposures of rooms. A room in the corner of a block is necessarily colder than one intermediate, and rooms at the top of the house have sometimes an advantage. The medium is about 75 feet, and the rule will apply when the temperature in the open air is 10 degrees below zero. This will illustrate the difficulty sometimes in sufficiently warming the apartment houses, the landlords being too economical in giving sufficient radiating surface to the pipes.

A GOOD HORSE.—The following is an ancient description of a good horse. "A good horse," says Julia Berners, in a tract on hunting, printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1496, "sholde have fifteen good propyrties and condycions; that is, to wyte, three of a man, three of a woman, three of a foxe, three of a hare, and three of an asse. Of a man, boled, prowde, and hardye; of a woman, fayre-breasted, fayre of heere, and easy to move, of a foxe, a fayre tayll, short eeres, and a good trotte; of a hare, a grete eye, a dry heed, and well rennying; of an asse, a bygge chynn, flat legge, and a good hoof."

THE OSTRICH.—The shells of the ostrich egg are converted, in South Africa, into water-flasks, cups, and dishes. Bush girls and Batalahan women, who belong to the wandering Bechuana tribes of the Kalahan desert, may often be seen coming down to the fountains from their remote habitations, sometimes situated at an amazing distance, each carrying on their back a kaup, or network, containing from twelve to fifteen ostrich egg-shells, which have been emptied by a small aperture at one end; these they fill with water, and then cork up the hole with grass.

CALIFORNIA EXCURSIONS.

The well known Phillips Excursion Company have arranged to run weekly excursions to all principal California and other Pacific Coast cities from all points on the Baltimore & Ohio R. R.

The parties will leave the East on Wednesday of each week, commencing January 17th, and passengers will be booked through to destination. There are no Pacific Coast tours offering as good accommodations at less expense. For full information address A. Phillips & Co., No. 111 S. 9th Street, Philadelphia, or call on nearest ticket agent B. & O. R. R. Co.

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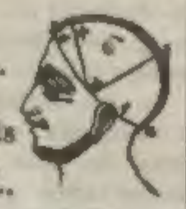

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Instructions to enable Ladies and Gentlemen to measure their own heads with accuracy:

FOR WIGS, INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.
No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck.
No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.
No. 4. From ear to ear round the forehead.

TOUPEES AND SCALPS, INCHES.
No. 1. From forehead back as far as bald.
No. 2. Over forehead as far as required.
No. 3. Over the crown of the head.

They have always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Frizettes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.

Dollard's Herbanium Extract for the Hair.

This preparation has been manufactured and sold at Dollard's for the past fifty years, and its merits are such that, while it has never yet been advertised, the demand for it keeps steadily increasing.

Also DOLLARD'S REGENERATIVE CREAM to be used in conjunction with the Herbanium when the Hair is naturally dry and needs an oil.

Mrs. Edmondson Gorter writes to Messrs. Dollard & Co., to send her a bottle of their Herbanium Extract for the Hair. Mrs. Gorter has tried in vain to obtain anything equal to it as a dressing for the hair in England.

MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER.
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
Nov., 29, '83. Norwich, Norfolk, England.

NAVY PAY OFFICE, PHILADELPHIA,

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